

An Exploration of Popular Education from Occupy! London to the University: Making Hope Possible in the Face of Neoliberal Enclosure?

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Abstract

The thesis is an examination of three sites of pedagogic experimentation: the pedagogic activities in the UK Occupy London movement (Occupy) as an example of organic community pedagogy and popular education; the Social Science Centre, Lincoln, as an example of democratic, cooperative pedagogy; and the University of Lincoln's Student as Producer project, as an example of an alternatively organised Higher Education Institution. The work explores not only the pedagogic practices within the sites under enquiry, but also the claims by key participants that they are new, emergent forms of educational organisation.

The pedagogical initiatives of the sites were investigated to explore whether a knowledge feedback loop could be created for knowledge exchange and support between higher education institutions, community groups and political and community activists which might afford new possibilities for activism at all levels. The thesis argues that this 'loop of learning', constituted in a similar but broader way to action research cycles, might enable political and pedagogical growth at all levels of education.

Therefore, the key research questions were those of whether this 'learning loop' or broad action research-type cycle between the organisations is feasible; and what forms of pedagogy and institutions might be instigated to enable this research cycle, develop mutual support and be utilised for a popular education for social transformation.

A bricolage approach to the research was adopted to enable the researcher to create an experimental approach to the research and to writing the thesis in order for it to contribute to the possibilities of this cycle and support. Occupy was utilised as the main case study for the research as it claimed by some to be an organic form of popular and critical pedagogy. It is argued that the possibility of examining and attempting to understand organic popular education as it happened could have something significant to contribute to theories of popular education and education for change. The other two sites are examined as supplementary forms of organisation to assess the feasibility of the learning loop. This entailed interviewing some of the key people in Occupy and the other sites, in addition to Internet searches on all subjects, reading academic and journalistic writings and keeping my own reflective journal about the processes and experiences.

The purpose of the thesis is to create a discussion on the forms of pedagogical and educational organisation that could potentially bring about social change and support a democratic public. The research argues that the pedagogy practiced by Occupy gave some insight into approaches to organic popular pedagogy, and that within this small scale study, it could be argued that some activists are beginning to bridge the gap between activism and academia by starting to understand the role of knowledge production in the struggle for transformative democracy and social justice. The research also examines whether the two supplementary sites have the potential to assist social movements and other community initiatives by connecting the different levels of knowledge production by forming a praxis of theory and action.

The research's main contributions to knowledge are that it examines a political social movement from a pedagogical point of view and assesses the claims regarding how learning in these particular sites are constituted in the current context. The research also examines the role of the researcher in creating 'really useful knowledge' to be utilised by both the academic and activist communities.

“To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing”

Raymond Williams, 1989

These people here on the streets of London, are learning, they are educating and being educated by the very fact of their being here. I wish people understood that, I wish people understood that school is not education and education is not school, for me the two concepts could not have been more different. People have said to me that I might not be interested in their story as they are not educated and would therefore be uninteresting for my study – on the contrary, they have a wealth of education, they are wildly interesting, they have the best education a person could have, they have street smarts, they have, for some reason been unsuccessful in the system of schooling – for me it was dyslexia and a non-conformist streak a mile wide – for them it could have been anything, a need to work, a racially biased curriculum, a gendered classroom, whatever. But, if they failed at school, yet they are still here, believing they can change things, then they are the most educated people I know.

(Author's Reflective Fieldwork Journal, 2012)

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Chapter One - Introduction

There is no tomorrow without a project, without a dream, without utopia, without hope, without creative work, and work towards the development of possibilities, which can make the concretization of that tomorrow viable.

(Freire, 2007: 26)

1.1 Why have I undertaken this work?

This thesis has undertaken an examination of the type/s of pedagogy being practiced within three 'pedagogic actions' in the UK that attempt to explore ways of people being together 'otherwise'. It attempts to examine the pedagogical social relations within these actions, and the claims being made about them in an attempt to understand what organisational forms might be realised in education in order to create the possibility of a transformative praxis for social justice and emancipatory learning. Each of these actions aims beyond merely anti-capitalist relations by prefiguring different ways of organising society through education. It is argued in each of these three actions and in this thesis that the social relations that are necessary for the continuation of a globalised capitalist society are harmful to human dignity, cooperation, and quality of life, as well as being harmful to the Earth itself in terms of environmental destruction through private ownership of all of nature itself (Graeber, 2013; Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2012; Harvey, 2003, 2011, 2012; Holloway, 2010; Smith, 1984; The Invisible Committee, 2009). It is also argued that new sites of struggle need to be identified as, due to the

changing nature of production, old theories regarding who can be revolutionary change agents may have to be revised (Fisher, 2009; Gorz, 1997; Hardt & Negri, 2004, 2012; Holloway, 2010; Melucci, 1989; Steinberg, 2007; The Invisible Committee, 2009).

Holloway (2010: 29) insists that “capitalism, ever since its beginning, has been a movement of enclosure, a movement of converting that which is enjoyed in common into private property”. Today we are becoming increasingly aware that this includes areas of life such as education (Bailey & Freedman, 2011; Couldry, 2011; Crowther *et al.*, 2005; Nixon, 2011; Williams, 2013, etc.). However, this research did not start out as attending to the privatisation or commodification of our education system; it started out as an exploration of the popular pedagogy taking place in the UK Occupy movement, particularly Occupy London and the Stock Exchange (LSX) camp outside St. Paul’s Cathedral, in the autumn of 2011 to the spring of 2012.

I was interested in what were being termed the ‘post-Seattle’ New Social Movements (Castells, 2012; Holloway, 2010; Katsiaficas, 2006; Shantz, 2013). They claimed to be practicing a less colonial ‘politics of the first person’ (Katsiaficas, 2006) than the old social movements of my childhood and it seemed that a new revolutionary subject could be being born and indeed, educated.

This stress on the politics of the first person; living the way you would like the future to be, or prefigurative politics: building a new world in the shell of the old (Holloway, 2010; Katsiaficas, 2006), felt exciting and vibrant – and extremely pedagogical. It seemed they were offering hope, the hope of starting the search for new ways of being. This interested me politically and

pedagogically because I agree with Webb (2010: 327) that “if hope is characterised as a constant search then the purpose of education is to act as its permanent guide.”

The key research questions, then, arose out of a specific interest as to the nature of the pedagogical experimentation discernible within the Occupy movement and how it might relate to other pedagogical experiments occurring nearer or within the formal academy such as the Social Science Centre and Student as Producer. Specifically, the questions can be stated as follows:

- What pedagogical experiment occurred within Occupy and what models of practice were identifiable?
- How relevant is the pedagogical experiment within Occupy to other radical pedagogical actions such as the Social Science Centre, Lincoln, and Student as Producer?
- Could a form of ‘learning loop’ or broad action research type cycle be established between the three different pedagogical actions (see Chapters Two, Four, Seven and Eight) as a way to connect different forms of learning within in social movements, community groups, and higher education establishments, so that they might support each other and find ways to share and contribute to each other’s knowledge and tactics for creating transformative change?

The first thing that caught my attention about the Occupy movement (Occupy) in London was that the largest structure in the Occupy LSX (London Stock Exchange) camp was ‘Tent City University’ (TCU), a large

marquee in which seminars, group discussions and workshops were taking place (Occupy London LSX, 2011a). This is where my research started. As Hardt and Negri (2012: 2) insist, “during the course of 2011...[there occurred] a series of social struggles that shattered common sense and began to construct a new one”. It is the argument in this thesis that this shattering and rebuilding of common sense was being attempted through forms of popular education. However, having done my fieldwork with Occupy London, I thought that more was needed for the research, perhaps something could be built from the disbursing ashes of Occupy, to give more permanence and purpose to the ideas and knowledges contained within the research. I then sought out other organisational forms that also claimed to be explicitly in opposition to the way things were in current society. Sites which were attempting to address the problems that they perceived through an education that might enable a democratic public. This led me to a chance encounter, or as I like to think of it, a ‘serendipitous research event’, through which I discovered the Student as Producer project at the University of Lincoln and a co-operative higher education provider, the Social Science Centre. It occurred to me that there may well be potential for some kind of trajectory of popular education from the streets, in the guise of Occupy, to the academy, particularly the University of Lincoln, that gave rise to the possibility of creating a line of solidarity, a support infrastructure and a feedback system, or learning loop. This support could allow teaching and research in these very different situations and circumstances to create a praxis that would lead to a form of ‘action research’ that allowed support and reflection from these differently organised educational initiatives. This action research cycle might then allow insight into how new and emerging organisational structures

within education might be constituted to build these new publics and allow the conditions for a formation of a radical democracy. The research took on a grander ambition.

A working definition of popular education is needed here, I am utilising the definition of popular education provided by Crowther *et al.* (2005: 2), as this definition is succinct and coincides with my own understanding of popular education. The definition is taken from the Popular Education Network (PEN), and was decided on by all members democratically:

Popular education is understood to be popular, as distinct from merely populist, in the sense that it is:

- Rooted in the real interests and struggles of ordinary people
- Overtly political and critical of the status quo
- Committed to progressive and social change

Popular education is based on a clear analysis of the nature of inequality, exploitation and oppression, and is informed by an equally clear political purpose. This has nothing to do with helping the 'disadvantaged' or the management of poverty; it has everything to do with the struggle for a more just and egalitarian social order.

The process of popular education has the following characteristics:

- The curriculum comes out of the concrete experience and material interests of people in communities of resistance and struggle
- Its pedagogy is collective, focussed primarily on group as distinct from individual learning and development
- It attempts, wherever possible, to forge a direct link between education and social action

Cavanagh adds to this "popular education is fundamentally anti-authoritarian and challenges dominant power relations. ... The processes of popular education are extremely effective for increasing people's capacities to function democratically and with critical mindedness" (Cavanagh in Borg & Mayo, 2007: 43). This is a clear definition and throughout this work, I will use

the terms critical pedagogy/education and popular education interchangeably. There may be subtle differences between them; however, in the messy reality of the worlds the research inhabits, any differences are permitted here without note.

Occupy seemed to be combining much of the new politics of prefiguration with a popular education that was being grown from the ground up and this is what had interested me. Of course as Schostak and Schostak (2013: vii) insist, “no research is ever undertaken without a motive...at the back of those motives is not just the curiosity of the scientist adopting a stance of ‘neutrality’ but a curiosity in-mixed with the whole range of emotions of everyday life that in every way subverts the neutrality, the objectivity”. I would argue that this need not be problematic as Schratz and Walker (1995: 5) describe, “once we admit that, as researchers, we hold values that affect the research that we do, we have to find ways to scrutinise our actions and our motives more closely”. These sentiments have informed many aspects of this work, not least its solidarity with those who contributed by allowing me into their life-worlds and experiences with a generosity that never ceased to amaze me. I have acknowledged that I am understanding “the role of science as first and foremost a cultural activity” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 9). Denzin (2010: 24) concurs with these views when he says, “All observation is theory-laden. There is no possibility of theory- or value-free knowledge. The days of naïve realism and naïve positivism are over”.

A personal motivation for this work is that I thought I hated ‘education’ as a teenager. I was hopeless at school; I was terrible at the things they wanted me to be good at, and good at the things they thought did not matter. I

always felt that there had to be another way for those who did/would/could not fit into the system to learn. I subsequently realised that it was schooling I felt so bad about, education, on the other hand, excited me greatly. My tension with the education/schooling dichotomy has become a central factor in my work as both community educator and educational researcher.

Modern schooling fails many people; there is much evidence to support this (for examples see Allen & Ainsley, 2007; Bahruth & Steiner, 2000; Clennon, 2014; Gatto, 2009; McLaren, 1998b). Popular belief may be that it is only those who are unintelligent that fail at school, but in my own experience and in my school failure, that is not true, not for me and I am sure for many like me. Perhaps one reason for this might be that as Shor (Shor in Macrine, 2009: 120) considers: “in years of right wing ascendancy, invitations from critical teachers to rethink the status quo face uphill battles in schools and classrooms”. There are many arguments about this point on schools, stemming back from Willard Waller’s (1932) *Sociology of Schooling*, Paul Willis’ (1977) *Learning to Labour* and through ideas such as Illich’s *Deschooling Society* (2011), Schostak’s *Maladjusted Schooling* (1983), McLaren’s *Life in Schools* (1998b) and many more. The debate around schools continues with authors such as Smyth *et al.* (2014) writing about *Socially Just Schooling* and Fielding and Moss (2011) who talk, in the Preface to the Italian edition of their book *Radical Education and the Common School*, about seeing little prospect in the current atmosphere of (re)creating schools as sites of radical possibilities. This is one of the reasons that this work argues that it may be time to turn our attention elsewhere, in this case, to the streets, to understand what, and where, the potential for sites of radical possibility is in the current day.

Illich (2011: 7) warns about people's "fanaticism in favour of school", about which he is an outspoken dissident, he argues that school "makes it possible to exploit doubly: it permits an increasing amount of public funds for the education of a few and increasing acceptance of social control by the many". Many scholars have written similar arguments about the nature of mass schooling (See, for example, Allen & Ainley, 2007; Gatto, 2009; Harber, 2004; Illich, 2011; Meighan & Harber, 2007; Schostak, 2012 among others), they will not be discussed here but will be drawn upon to motivate the development of alternatives, as most of the authors mentioned call for. These arguments have been taken into account to rule out the possibility of mass state-controlled schooling being of any use to the aim of social transformation at this time in our history. Attending to these arguments in this way also allows this work to make the distinction between schooling, which aims to train and tame people, into the new, neoliberalised industrial reserve army (Marx, 1867/1990) and education, which is to be separated from the notion of schooling. Education, it is argued here, as elsewhere, is the process of critically becoming, of creating the possibilities for imagining and creating alternatives and a safe space, free from judgement and discrimination, to enact those alternatives and create the world that exists not yet. Therefore, I argue here that an examination of what was happening on the streets, when people who wished to change things got together and organised their own educational activities, is necessitated as our classrooms are perhaps, on the whole, no longer what bell hooks (1994: 12) calls "spaces of radical possibility".

This is where I start then, with a study that argues that my research is education; not only for me, but also for others I encounter along the way, the

researched, individuals at conferences where I speak, and who read the publications I write. From a position which understands that I am applying my own standpoint, my own understandings as an involved researcher, a specific type of learner, a person who is capable of critical thought, but not objectivity.

In addition, I believe, as Darder (2002: 30) does that “there is no question that in today’s world, no authentic form of democratic life is possible for the future without a revolutionary praxis of hope that works for both the transformation of social consciousness on the one hand and the reconstruction of social structures on the other”. Hardt and Negri (2012: 30) add to this that “democracy will be realised only when a subject capable of grasping it and enacting it has emerged”. The thesis will argue that this subject, as an intellectual public, has begun to emerge out of the practices discussed throughout. The social structure that I understand best is education and I will argue throughout that it is education that will assist in the emergence of the subject capable of grasping and enacting democracy.

The research is written in a conversational style (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Schratz & Walker, 1995) in the hope that this makes it accessible and to create a relationship, an organisational structure, that engages the reader in the ideas centred on action and reflection. Hopefully allowing the reader to get the sense of entering the field as stranger (Schutz, 1944) and becoming traveller (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). This is attempted through a bricolage methodology (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) allowing for an experimental design where the theory is grounded in the data and then the two are put in conversation with each other. This method will be discussed in detail in

Chapter Four. However, suffice to say here, that the study takes a post-disciplinary approach to its knowledge work and utilises what Kincheloe and Berry (2004) call the fictive and imaginative elements of the bricolage, allowing the researcher to attempt to access the research subjects as equals and often on their terms (Patrick, 1973; Whyte, 1943). The notion of subjects as equals grounds the methodology in democratic theory (Lefort, 1988; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 1999, 2005, 2013). In the writing up of the project, the fictive and imaginative traits of bricolage are utilised particularly in the post analysis discussion, to engender the possibility that the work can travel into the imagined future and create potentialities based on the uncovered stories of the sites explored.

It is argued that the bricolage approach revealed the emergence of key protagonists, through whom the initial reading could be theorised: Paulo Freire, who brought to the work an understanding of critical, politically engaged pedagogy; Ira Shor, who provided an example of critical democratic power sharing in an adult classroom; Jacques Rancière, who suggested the notion that it is possible to teach what you do not understand; and John Holloway, who's unique form of open Marxism (see Bonefeld, *et al.*, 1992a, 1992b, 1995) brings to the conversation a potential plan to 'crack capitalism' and escape from enclosure. There are, of course other voices present, however these authors provide the backbone because, I will argue, they echoed the sentiments of the London Occupy movement and our other spaces of hope (Harvey, 2000)

1.2 How is the Work Organised?

Chapter Two attempts to give a context to the research by introducing the notion of developing a form of praxis that is reminiscent of an action research cycle wherein research becomes the theory development aspect of improving the efficacy of social movements, community education groups and other grass roots initiatives. This chapter also attempts to bring a sense of 'being there' to the work in describing not only the empirical work that was carried out during the research but also, using fieldwork journal extracts, allows the reader to accompany me in experiencing the sensations and surprises of Occupy and the other sites, introducing the use of personal story which continues throughout.

Chapter Three introduces the case study of Occupy and the other two supplementary sites. This is needed to give the reader further context from which to understand the situatedness of the work because the rest of the work is grounded on an understanding of the sites. The key features of this situatedness are the current socio-political climate that gave rise to Occupy in 2011 and the educational response they gave, the dissatisfaction with the neoliberal university and the responses from the two supplementary sites and the notion that all three sites are connected by their desire to do education differently and to teach politically. This grounding allows an understanding of the way the organisations used are currently constituted.

Chapter Four, rethinking research, introduces the reader to the concept of radical research being developed and employed in the work. Based on a bricolage approach, which allows multiple ways of seeing from different disciplines, attempting to create a post-disciplinary ethos, allowing for more

voices to be heard within the research. I argue that this ethos supports the notion of radical democracy as it allows for complexity, contention, imagination and the temporality of knowledges. This form of radical research is employed because it allows a mix of the politics and pedagogy that are essential to the way the sites both work and claim to work. It also allows the use of a variety of critical tools, such as the mixture of pedagogical and political theory, imagination and creativity, and a rigorous openness, in order to interpret the politics and pedagogy so that their possible potential for creating new forms of organisation can be imagined. The chapter also examines the form of radical research employed as a form of activism in its own right.

Chapter Five concentrates on theories of pedagogy that I argue could have the potential to create the necessary conditions to create social change within the ideological framework claimed by the politics of Occupy, the imaginings of which have been initiated by the creative, fictive and ideological underpinnings of the bricolage approach to research. It seeks to examine democratic pedagogy that emancipates rather than conditions and constrains and does this by choosing two relevant examples of pedagogical thought.

In Chapter Six the Occupy data is examined in detail in light of the emergent themes from the theoretical offerings. It examines the data through questions raised within the theoretical examination and asks whether the pedagogy practiced within the Occupy case study was transformative and emancipating or whether it reproduced forms of schooling. Therefore attempting to understand whether it could be possible to dispense with educational

organisational forms that currently exist, or whether this form of organic pedagogy would allow conditioned behaviours to remain unchallenged as no skilled pedagogue was there to pick them up.

In Chapter Seven the outcomes of the examination of Occupy are utilised to attempt to understand whether there are structures that already exist, or could be collectively constructed, that could support social movements and popular education initiatives, in this case the SSC and SaP. This is done by garnering an understanding of these organisations in relation to what their claims are and what they can potentially offer in terms of support that would lead to less hierarchical forms of pedagogy being able to rid themselves of oppressive behaviours and attitudes.

Chapter Eight then examines the arguments contained in the thesis and explores the learning from the three sites together in themes to understand the implications to education, research and social relations of what has been uncovered in the explorations of the theory, the case study of Occupy and the other sites. It argues that there is, at least, the potential to build strong connections between the various forms of organisation and that the forms of self-organisation and already organised forms have varying potential for promoting voice, equality and democracy in the current socio-political juncture and asks questions about possible ways forward. It continues on to argue that at the current moment we may well need forms of organisation that have a pedagogical vanguard in order to begin a cultural transformation and escape from the enclosure of ourselves into dominating and oppressive behaviours so that we might, one day, be able to dispense with these forms and create a more organic, non-hierarchical and fluidic form of education.

In Chapter Nine, the thesis is concluded, looking back at the arguments had and what arguments are still important to have in future research. The conclusion details what I see as this work's contribution to the knowledge we have and to ongoing debates about how education for a socially just world might look.

Chapter Two: Introduction to the Research

The main question for my initial explorations was whether a *form* of action research could be developed between grass roots, popular education, protest movements and academe that was practical and transformative and what form of pedagogical organisation would allow this to flourish. Because the learning within Occupy was, for the most part, organic and popular (see introduction), it needed to be witnessed and recorded for what it was; critically analysed; and then the learning from the analysis disseminated¹. This has the potential to allow those practicing forms of popular education, such as that seen at Occupy, to have a sound praxis, a mixture of practice and theory, underpinning their experiments. This form of witness and recording, critical analysis, dissemination and reimplementation has the traits of action research but on a 'grander scale'. It can be argued that this notion of the grander scale is implied because the research cycle would not be confined to one organisation or setting. Instead, knowledges could be shared to improve practice among many organisations and settings for a singular purpose of creating curricula across the board aimed at strengthening struggles for social justice and creating cracks in the fabric of the capitalism that encloses society. This 'grand' action research cycle was envisaged because the data I collected showed that Occupy had no time for reflection or theorising whilst the occupation was in progress, as shall be discussed in

¹ One outlet for this type of dissemination has been the UK Occupy Research Collectives research shares held in London.

Chapter's Three, Four and Five. There was no way of researchers entering that sphere and instigating an action research project of the traditional type.

Clearly this piece of research is not an action research project as that would have been impractical in such a fluid and fast paced movement. However, my research attempts to give a sense of 'being there' so that it is recognisable to those that were there in the hope that it will be useful to them. In this sense, once the action ended, there would be practical data (in the guise of not just my research but of the many projects revolving around different aspects of the movement) thus creating the potential for researchers and activists to sit down together and begin to understand all the forces that had acted upon the movement, both internally and externally, to influence its performance and effectiveness, like action research but without the in-project iteration. Denzin (2010) calls this being critical secretary to the social movement, here I will attempt to extend this notion to allow a two-way flow of learning. This overarching question for the research meant that it was important to allow other questions to emerge throughout the thesis to enable further learning. This notion of the two-way flow of learning, could allow for reinterpretation and development of this work in other contexts, another bricolage value (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). If this work allows questions for those undertaking this form of curricula design to emerge as necessary issues to think about, it has the potential to contribute to those struggles in a robust manner as it reveals some of the possible pitfalls of these curricula for those implementing them, thus creating what Shukaitis and Graeber (2007), among others, call 'Really Useful Knowledge'.

Themes emerged which were explored to varying degrees, such as the initial question from the data regarding whether or not Occupy, and the other spaces, were able to practice a transformative critical pedagogy, given their structures. The literature brought up its own questions: whether one could indeed teach what one did not understand in these circumstances; what possible conditions were needed for a pedagogy to become truly transformative; was power being shared in teaching spaces and what were the challenges for building socially just organisations of each of these. The further analysis of the data created the questions regarding how each strata of education could assist the others and in what ways could we practice research in order to ensure that our assistance was not delivered in a colonial or patriarchal manner (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010).

As Schratz and Walker (1995: 5) insist, “lacking the stability of stable paradigms and accepted methods throws the researcher back on personal resources; imaginative, cognitive and moral”, adopting bricolage has certainly done this, but has led me to an interesting exercise in “radical openness” (Schostak & Schostak 2008: 8).

2.1 What did I hope to find through the research?

Holloway (2010: 11) argues that “in this world in which radical change seems so unthinkable, there are already a million experiments in radical change, in doing things in a different way... there has been a surge in recent years, a growing perception that we cannot wait for the great revolution that we have to start to create something different here and now”. History seems to

confirm this; and there are indeed many experiments in radical change right now and it has been difficult to limit myself to detailing three.

People like Darder (2002: 30) argue that “only through a praxis of hope can alliances across differences be forged – alliances sufficiently strong for teachers and students to ‘learn together, teach together, be curiously impatient together, produce something together and resist the obstacles’ (Freire, 1998: 69)”. In addition, the argument continues that democracy is, or should be, a politics of hope (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2005), also, Holloway (2010) insists on trust as a centrally organising principle for any new society. There are many more arguments concerning trust and hope, particularly in terms of forging alliances and ensuring that any ‘empty place of power’ (Lefort, 1988) created through struggle is not filled by populist leaders (Arditi, 2008), or that consent is not manufactured by elites (Bernays, 1928, 1947; Herman & Chomsky, 1994; Lippman, 1922, 1927). Trust and hope are seen by many to counteract these tendencies. This study attempts to take these two notions, hope and trust, to the core of their necessity.

In contributing to hope, I argue that there is indeed the potential for a trajectory of pedagogical ‘otherness’ that could be utilised as a support network and that there is a necessity for this support network and ‘learning loop’, or feedback system, in order to build resilience and progression into grassroots popular movements and education projects. I argue too, that there is also much scope for encompassing a more critical and popular education ethos into our teaching and learning practices in higher education to begin the process of reconstitution, and still greater need for the development and extension of institutions of the commons to enable a

democratic, learning and intellectual public to be fostered. All these notions could be seen to support the argument that it is difficult but indeed not impossible to change the world and that transformative pedagogy, instigated by skilled pedagogues could make escape from the enclosure of capitalist and neoliberal social relations (Holloway, 2010) a possibility. Not only may this be possible, but I argue, necessary, if we are to reverse the privatisation and enclosure of our increasingly atomised selves.

2.2 What does the research hope to contribute?

This thesis has not been an attempt to make the familiar unfamiliar, but instead an attempt to disquiet the familiar by allowing the unfamiliar to be known (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010). These are strange times of upheaval and unrest: think for example of the so-called 'Arab Spring' that preceded the global Occupy movement and more recently the protests, revolutions and civil wars in Syria, Ukraine, Latin America and other places. Think for a moment about the very English riots in the summer of 2011² (Arditi, 2012; Bloom, 2012; Tyler, 2013; Žižek, 2013, 2014) and other upheavals brought about by global austerity measures in response to the globalised banking crisis. Many people seem angry, confused, bitter and are becoming increasingly insurrectional as a result.

However, many of these protests, insurrections, riots, revolutions have had increasingly negative effects and as Shantz (2013: 72) insists, "there is a

² For example see <http://oliviajackson.wordpress.com/2011/08/10/a-very-british-riot/> or <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/46835/Youth.SG.Collisions.Coalitions.Report.2012.pdf> or <http://www.open.ac.uk/ccig/dialogues/blogs/making-a-difference-riotous-assemblies-and-the-state-of-society>.

pressing need ... for institutions, organisations, and relations that can sustain people as well as building capacities for self-defence and struggle". This work explores some of the possibilities of developing such institutions, organisations and relations.

Johnston (2005: 67) argues that "a key contribution from popular educators might also be to embark on a more intensive attempt at documenting popular education practice.....In this way, popular education praxis can be better understood promoted and built upon". The thesis attempts, then, to document and witness a microcosm of education that is claimed to be popular and alternative in three very different but potentially important sites. It attempts to connect them, find the lines of continuity between them and offer suggestions as to how they might help support and sustain each other and move forward.

The contribution contained in this thesis, then, is an exploration of a potential trajectory of popular, critical pedagogies, framed around the two different ideas of universal teaching (Ranci re, 1991) and critical, democratic power-sharing (Shor, 1996), that may have the potential to engender a popular education from the streets to the academy and back. I will reconnoitre the lines, loops and connections between the three pedagogical spaces. The work will attempt to understand, as its contribution to on-going debates, whether there are enough lines of continuity, enough connections and understandings, to enable the creation of a trajectory from one to another. Creating this feedback system of popular education practice and theory – a learning loop which can cycle as a form of praxis, creating a 'grand' action research cycle that one day may have the efficacy to enable a reconstitution

of educational establishments into learning commons with revolutionary organisational forms.

This work has attempted to reveal situations of oppression within the spaces analysed; as critical friend. This has been an attempt to create a different role for the researcher in unsettled times, a more active role in the battle against enclosure.

My intention has been to contribute to what Shukaitis and Graeber (2007: 11) describe as “Thoughts. Provocations. Explorations. Forms of investigation and social research that expand possibilities for political action, proliferating tactics of resistance through the constituent power of the imagination”. It endeavours to be a contribution to the thinking about “the power of the bricolage to expand research methods and construct a more rigorous mode of knowledge about education” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 1), even if in a small way, explored in Chapter Four.

Therefore, the overall contribution this work hopes to make to other ongoing discussions is one of examining possibilities, allowing new questions to emerge from the specific context and creating further hope for an educational praxis that could make a difference to where we are now and where we are going. In order to attempt this then, a real sense of being there is needed, firstly to give context to my own reflections and the questions that emerge from my inquiries, and secondly to enable those who examine my work to excavate reflections and questions of their own.

2.3 Being There

In this section I wish to evoke that important sense of 'being there', the personalised contextualisation of my experiences. I have done this by reproducing extracts from my own reflective journal (distinguished by italics) punctuated with an account of the fieldwork aspects. This allows the reader to travel through the process of the research with me in order to understand how the research was personally viewed, who I encountered and where. This is an attempt to allow a fuller understanding of the research, its emergent questions, its reflections and its conclusions. It is also hoped that by understanding the personal context of the research, it becomes a more useful part of an ongoing conversation between researcher and reader, particularly when that reader uses the text from their point of view of Occupy or educational activist. I would argue that this is because the sense of being there creates an impression from someone outside the movement, who looked inside to see if specific elements could be detected and questioned in order to shed light on a specific element of not just the actions that took place in this specific context, but also the nature and organisation of our social relations viewed through this complex and fluid phenomena.

I was excited about my first fieldwork trip to the Occupy LXS encampment in London. I had seen, like so many others, the news reports; I had read the statements that came out of the camp; and I had seen the procession of big names who gave teach outs and lectures on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral. Now it was my turn to visit. I made my way across London to St. Paul's, wondering all the time, what would it really be like, would they talk to me, would they shun me because I wasn't taking the action that they were?

During my case study fieldwork of Occupy London, particularly the main, intrinsic case study³ (Stake, 1995) of the Occupy LSX (London Stock Exchange) encampment I conducted several strands of inquiry. These strands were all conducted between January 2012 and October 2013. On three occasions, I visited the encampment at St. Paul's Cathedral. This is my impression on the first visit:

I came out of the tube station at St. Paul's there seemed to be nothing happening here at all, just the usual shoppers, office workers rushing about and tourists meandering around. It was freezing cold, that winter had been particularly harsh, and even now in the middle of February, the temperatures were sub-zero and even the rushed city workers were bundled up in coats, hats and scarves.

As I rounded the corner into the square, my eyes were wide with wonderment. There were quite a few tents, small structures organised in what looked like groupings, with all the doors facing the inside of circles they had made, presumably this was for safety at night. Most displayed slogans, anti-capitalist messages; some serious, some tongue in cheek: the camp had a sense of humour. Some of the tents were on pieces of carpet, some on wooden pallets, to keep the sleeper from the freezing cold paving stones. All around this canvas settlement, people went about their business, crowded coffee shops and cafes full of tourists and suited business people; shops selling souvenirs and all the essentials of daily life in the capitalist City.

As I walked further into the camp, there were some larger tents. The camp had a very relaxed atmosphere, there was a level of bustle and a low level of the noise of discussion and debate about, other than that it had the feeling of a place anyone could come and just hang out, get into conversations, and just maybe save the world. There was one grouping of tents that looked very organised, about four or five small tents in a circle, outside the entrance to the tents were deck and lawn chairs placed in a neat circle on what looked like a piece of AstroTurf, there was a sign that came into view as I walked further 'Anonymous Lawn'. The hackivist group had produced this space for themselves. By my estimate, there must have been around 60 tents crammed into the square between the fire exit lines, the Cathedral and the busy road. The steps of St. Paul's rose out of the camp, like a great precipice, a symbol of affluence and control.

³ Intrinsic case study will be explored in more detail in Chapter Four.

All of my visits to the camp took place in February 2012. As Occupy London was the most pertinent site because of the presence of Tent City University. I would have liked to have done more there, however, only a few weeks after I started the fieldwork the site was evicted by the police following a court order.

I decided that after the camp was evicted I would continue to explore Occupy and I visited four more individual Occupiers⁴ in London this was to enable me to understand not only the euphoria produced by taking part in the encampment, but also the aftermath. The interviews took place in the Friends Meeting House on Euston Road between May 2012 and May 2013.

The café at the Quaker Friends Meeting House on Euston Road, London was becoming a home away from home; sometimes I would meet one person from Occupy and find myself sitting next to an Occupy working group discussing issues ranging from how to reform the global banking system, to how to get people to recycle more and everything in between. I met and conversed with a variety of people, sometimes for a number of hours, all impassioned and ready to tell of their own experience. Almost every conversation started with the words 'I can only speak for myself, everyone has their own experience of Occupy', but their experiences overlapped and intertwined to build a picture of a group of people who really cared about changing the world, who really felt that there were possibilities and potential, but who were realistic, their idealism tempered by the events that had unfolded.

A few months after the eviction of the encampment, I heard about the Occupy Research Collective Convergence (June 1st 2012) on the Occupy web site. This was organised by members of Occupy London, who were inviting those researching social movements to 'converge' and discuss. The event was attended by many Occupiers and researchers carrying out a variety of inquiries into Occupy:

⁴ The people involved in Occupy identified themselves as 'Occupiers' therefore I am using the term in this work.

More and more researchers, students and activists crowded into a room to discuss ways in which to research social movements, Occupy in particular, that produced 'really useful' social knowledge and gave those who spoke out against injustice a voice that did not reduce their doings to mere academic discourse.

Soon, the convergence was alive with critical discourse about the ethics of social movement research, the issues of activist researchers and collusions on activities from organising public intellectual speaking events to setting up a working group on radical teaching. Issues were hotly debated and new knowledges, understandings and alliances were formed, as well as disagreements that were a step too far to be reconciled. The discussions and debates were lived streamed across the globe, with participants from all over the world tweeting comments and suggestions and sending messages of solidarity and support.

There were other events, not necessarily directly related to the Occupy London case study that I attended and saw as part of the fieldwork as they gave a great deal of useful background to the issues and were a good chance to meet occupiers that I had not yet met. Two such events where members of Occupy London (and other Occupations) were speaking, one in London, a day conference at the British Library on the nature of knowledge and one in Manchester on the Economy for the 99% conference organised by MMU students Union.

My interactions with the occupiers were mainly one-to-one semi-structured interviews (termed in this thesis as mutually useful conversations).

These conversations took place throughout the length of the study, from interactions inside 'Tent City' to those described earlier in the Friends Meeting House. These conversations became increasingly difficult to organise and arrange, due to the transient nature of those involved in the encampment. However, I managed to carry out eleven conversations in all, varying in length between twenty minutes and two hours depending on the

availability of the occupier and the context of the conversation. In total there are approximately twelve hours of interview data. During this time I spoke with five men and six women, this mix was more by incident than design, although it does give a view from both genders almost equally. The conversations were contextually interesting and added to the sense of strangeness that a great deal of the research had:

The first interview was conducted inside the marquee of TCU (Tent City University), this was my first encounter with anyone from the camp. We sat and chatted about his experience. Half way through the interview, he stopped and said, "thanks for coming down here and sticking a voice recorder in my face". I wasn't sure what to say, or what he meant, I started to apologise and he said "no, no, I mean it, thanks. It's not often anyone wants to really listen to what you have to say, is it? I mean that's what we're here for, to talk, but sometimes your voice gets lost and you wonder whether anyone is really listening."

He and I were validated by the interview experience: him being worthy enough for someone to bear witness to his thoughts and actions, and me because he honoured me with his trust and his insight. We talked for another twenty five minutes, during which time, as we sat and tried to reason the mess people were in, in the freezing cold and undercover of a genuine people's university, we heard the chimes of St. Paul's Cathedral, a little while later a drumming workshop started up the other side of the thin plastic wall and we had to raise our voices, but still talking in a slightly hushed, conspiratorial way. There was a calm reflection in his voice, tentative and exploratory, but hopeful and determined to make the most out of this break with real life.

Of the eleven interviews I managed to arrange or carry out by turning up at the camp, four were recorded as whole conversations and fully transcribed (three women, one man); three were recorded and partially transcribed, due to noise, interruption and on one occasion failure of equipment (two women, one man); and four were recorded in note form as it was either difficult because of setting, or inappropriate to record the conversation electronically (one woman, three men). The setting of the fieldwork did not always lend itself to the research desire to capture everything that was being said:

The Tech Tent was an old green army style ridge tent, smaller tents crowded in around it.

I was invited in through a small opening in the bottom of the otherwise draw-strung door, a measure against the cold weather was to not open the tent fully for anyone. Crouching down to get in I entered a strange, cramped world of plug boards, posters and smoke, the low whirring sound of laptop fans and the tapping of keyboards gave an atmosphere of an old office building. Instead, I saw a collection of young men, variously absorbed in what they were doing.

Most of the men greeted me warmly and offered to clear a camp bed for me to sit on, I declined, the camp bed was piled high with someone's belongings and sleeping bags. There were plug boards hanging from the horizontal pole in the middle of the apex of the tent and about eight leads from laptops of varying quality that were on the tables that ran the length of the tent. The tent was very cramped and smelt of smoke and stale sweat; it was a very male place. One of the men asked me what I was doing at Occupy, just in an inquisitive way. I told him the story of my research some of the occupants became interested. The first man, started to tell me about the camp and why it was there. I was frustrated because I couldn't get everything that was said down in notes or use my voice recorder. Dan wanted to tell his story, and what a story, he had volunteered to become Litigant in Person for the camps eviction hearing, just as he started relating how tough it had been to understand property laws, another person arrived with two A4 binders stuffed full of legal papers. "When does that have to read by?" he asked the delivering person, "tomorrow, but some people have said they'll help later". "Do you have a legal background?" I asked. He didn't, when someone was needed to be the litigant in person he stepped up to the plate because he thought it was the right thing to do; this camp was a place where anything could happen.

The men in the Tech Tent had so much to say, I was frustrated that I couldn't capture it all, standing there in the corner of the crowded tent. There was an immediacy to the stories, as if they were bursting, desperate to be told. He talked of the problems and his own subsequent awakening to what he called realism and self-awareness.

I have also included in my data, mainly as background, a great deal of casual conversation.

This is because during my fieldwork I had several spontaneous, casual conversations with occupiers, this includes at the Occupy LSX camp and the Occupy Research Collective Convergence and conferences. During these conversations, I always made it clear that I was a researcher collecting

stories of the learning that was taking place in the Occupy movement and informed people that unless they specified otherwise, I might use their words in my research. These casual conversations, where they appear, are recounted from memory and notes written sometimes hours after the encounter. These casual conversations make up approximately twenty direct one-to-one encounters (equally men and women) and contact with around one hundred people.

We walked slowly through the site, chatting as we went. She talked, as so many people there did, about the urgent necessity to change the way we live and the current system, she said that she had met many people who were doing research on the camp and she was glad that academics were interested. "We need people to speak about us and write about us, we need to get the message out, that things need to change" she said. I asked whether she would be happy to talk further, "no, I'd rather not, I'm really busy", "we could arrange another day?", "no, I'm always rushed off my feet". The question in my mind was how she expected to get her message out there if she didn't give it to anyone.

As I have already touched upon, Occupy used the Internet extensively, this too has been carefully read, recorded and analysed for its content as knowledge dissemination from the camp. The Internet-based element of the inquiry has several strands; the first is that of watching 'Livestreams' of events. During the research, I watched several events on Occupy London's Livestream: these events consisted of six General Assemblies; five 'teach outs'; the eviction of the Occupy LSX camp. In total, this amounts to roughly twenty hours of footage, from which I recorded, in note form, interesting elements of the proceedings. The Occupy Livestream gave those who could not be at the camp a sense of being there, however, once I had visited I realised that sense of being there was distorted and did not really give the

same impression as actually being there and sometimes it was quite a disconcerting experience:

Watching the eviction of the St. Paul's camp is hard. There is quite a large police presence, although not as many as one might have expected. The live stream feels very tense, people are obviously worried. A lot of the tents and other structures seem to have been taken down already, the TCU marquee has gone.....The police have moved in now and people are climbing onto a structure that they have built in the middle of the square, they are being pulled off it with no concern for their safety. People are also praying on the steps of the Cathedral, asking for sanctuary and the police are just hauling them off, still on their knees. It's so difficult with the hand held camera moving around to capture any and all injustices and incidences of violence and repression.....The news has just come in that the police have illegally evicted the School of Ideas building at the same time as the St. Paul's camp. There is a lot of shock about this, it seems that there were only a few people left there, everyone else had come down to St. Paul's to help defend it or act as witnesses to what was happening. Maybe this act shows the power of education and the violent reaction to a thinking public?

The second source of online data supply was via the Occupy London and Tent City University (TCU) web sites. I visited these web sites on numerous occasions, both sites are designed to give information about events being organised by Occupy London and TCU. The Occupy London web site consisted of reactions to items appearing in general news bulletins; blogs from Occupiers about why they joined Occupy; information about what is happening in the camp; and statements for the general public created at the GAs. TCU's web site advertised workshops, speakers and seminars based in TCU. It also provided a space for reflection about education and invited blogs from people who had attended events at TCU and who had ideas on education. These web sites also gave a valuable insight into the movement as they were multi-user so anyone could blog or comment on them.

During the online fieldwork, I also took on the arduous task of reading through the minutes from the General Assemblies. The Occupy London web

site has a collection of minutes from every GA that the camp held. This totals a collection of minutes (in note form) taken at the initially daily, then weekly GAs from October 2011 – March 2012, when the camp was in place and also includes minutes from the bi-weekly GAs that were held for three months after the camp was evicted. The GA minutes constitute hundreds of pages of notes. Due to the volume of information, individual GA minutes were selected on a bi-weekly basis to gauge the mood and direction of the GAs rather than to use them as a primary source of data.

I also joined the Facebook group for Occupy London in order to gauge the direction and feeling of the movement. The information on the Facebook site mainly mirrored that of the Occupy London web site, or contained memes with anti-capitalist sentiment. Due to the problematic issues of using social media sites to gather data and because the Facebook site had no more valuable insights than other mediums, I have not used this data directly, but have used it more to get a sense of what was happening in the wider movement and where to look for more detailed information. However, it did inform my work in that it gave me a sense of how many people were supportive of the movement and how they dealt with Internet trolling⁵.

A valuable source of data from Occupy also came from various kinds of external literature about Occupy. Parts of the academic community were alight around the subject of the Occupy Movement worldwide and much was written about it. I have continuously searched academic and journalistic literature about Occupy London throughout the project.

⁵ Internet Trolling according to Wikipedia refers to a person who sows discord on the Internet by starting arguments or upsetting people, by posting inflammatory, extraneous, or off-topic messages in an online community (such as a newsgroup, forum, chat room, or blog) with the deliberate intent of provoking readers into an emotional response or of otherwise disrupting normal on-topic discussion (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Troll_%28Internet%29).

The newspaper articles about Occupy were abundant both during and for a while after the encampment including 436 articles about Occupy in the UK Guardian Newspaper alone. There were also books written by Journalists, including Paul Mason's *Why It's Kicking Off Everywhere* (Mason, 2012) and its sequel, *Why It's Still Kicking Off Everywhere* (Mason, 2013); *This Changes Everything: Occupy Wall Street Movement and the 99%* Edited by van Gelder and the Staff of Yes! Magazine (2011), there are more, however, there were problems using this as data⁶.

The academic and mixed literature included academic journals and edited collections which included essays written by both journalists, notable occupiers and academics, these books included: *The Occupy Handbook* (Byrne, 2012); *Occupy: Scenes from Occupied America* (The Contributors, 2011); *Occupy! Three Inquiries in Disobedience* (Mitchell et al., 2013); *Occupy!* (Chomsky, 2012); *What is Occupy? Inside the Global Movement*

⁶ One of the main problems that I faced with my literature search on Occupy was that the majority of the articles were written not about Occupy London but about other Occupy camps (except for the ones I have quoted from directly in the thesis). Predominately the texts were about Occupy Wall Street (OWS) in Zucotti Park, New York City, USA. There has also been great interest in other US camps and also the 15M or *Indignados* movement in Spain. There are several potential reasons for the emphasis on US Occupy camps. In his book *The New Imperialism* (2003), David Harvey explains how the City of New York claimed the title of cultural capital of the world from Paris in an act of accumulation by dispossession. Harvey feels that the US has created the prominent status of New York City (NYC) to create a cultural, artistic, political and economic global capital. This may ensure that what happens in NYC is seen to be of much more interest and importance than what happens elsewhere. This has certainly been reflected by the profusion of literature on OWS over and above the occurrence of literature on other Occupy camps and actions. An additional reason for the academic concentration on OWS may be because the movement is said to have started here first (Graeber, 2011; Kroll, 2011) and that creates more interest as OWS was the original inspiration for the global movement. There is also the notion that the world was more fascinated by the idea that there was dissent in one of the major cities of the world, NYC and in the largest superpower in the world the USA. This scale of dissent had not been seen in the US since the 1960s and 70s (Berrett, 2011; Chomsky, 2012; Gamson & Sifry, 2013; Gitlin, 2013) and therefore it had an element of curiosity that captured the imagination of scholars more so than 'yet another' protest in Europe. The 15M or *Indignados* movement was taken more notice of because of Spain being on the brink of following Greece into economic chaos and potential bankruptcy (Castells, 2012).

(Time Magazine, 2011); and many others, (again, see footnote for the problems relating to this literature*).

Academic journal articles were counted as data (as described in Chapter Four, 4.1, to form an intertextuality) as many of them were written by academics who were involved in the camps. In addition, journals such as *Social Movement Studies* and *Interface* have activist interventions and essays included alongside academic peer-reviewed articles. These two journals had special issues on the Occupy Movement, which have been used in the description of the case study (Chapter 2) and where the articles are directly relating to Occupy London, as data.

These multiple ways of data gathering on the Occupy LXS case study have allowed me to gain a deeper insight into the context of the movement - and thus the pedagogy that took place - through a process of triangulation (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Orum *et al.*, 1991; Snow & Anderson, 1991; Stake, 1995). According to Stake (1995: 109) triangulation is “efforts that go beyond simple repetition of data gathering to deliberative effort to find the validity of data observed” and “to get meanings straight, to be more confident that the evidence is good” researchers “look and listen from more than one vantage point.....being sceptical that [participants/events] were seen or heard right and checking further” (Stake, 2010: 123). This has meant that the use of multiple sources has built up a picture of the case study, how it is viewed by some outsiders and how it is viewed by many of those participating. This method also enabled me to understand more fully the data from the conversations with occupiers as I was able, then, to take into account and understand the context in which their opinions are based. I would argue that

utilising this particular process of gathering data on Occupy not only gave me an understanding about this particular case, but also allowed me to muse about wider implications of creating publics and the workings of multitudes (Hardt & Negri, 2004, 2012):

On the train going home, my visits made me wonder if the people there are so desperate to tell their stories because they feel that they have found their voices there, inside the city of tents, but most of the time they only have each other to listen to them. They feel that their voices are important, strong, reasoned and meaningful but halted by the walls of their city, twisted upon exit by the media and the disrespect of the people that walk by and make their ample living from the very institutions that these people critique and deplore. They have a loud, validated and supported voice internally but where is their outlet? The internet is one place but the comment streams give rise only to polarised opinions and harsh criticism, it is less a place for debate as it is a place for ingenuous courage to slander and attack, often from both sides. As I sit on the train, returning to my warm home and comfortable bed, the thoughts pour out onto the page, Occupy certainly makes you think. I fully understood what MacKenzie (2011) wrote: we may think that Occupy failed, but it has succeeded very well at hacking the imagination.

So what does this all mean? In the context of how we make change happen in the world, we as social actors in the midst of a crisis, not just a financial crisis but a crisis of faith, faith in our political structures, faith in our politicians, faith in the very core idea of democracy and even, more and more, in each other. There has to be more, Occupy are disintegrating and fading fast and may soon be gone from the collective consciousness. Education is surely in the business of compiling, remembering, extending and savouring what has happened as well as creating the new: education is learning, learning from the past and creating the future. Thus as education researchers and practitioners, there should be so much that we can do to bring these voices, these experiences and these events into that future with us, with those who wish to remember and those who wish to extend. Can we take up the rallying cry? Can we, not build the future ourselves, but be part of the collective that does? Can we not take the hope created and turn it into something more tangible, assist that which is in danger of melting into air be made solid, hopeful and strong. There has to be a conversation going on which my work can join....

These conversations are beginning to take place, books and papers are being published more and more on the subject of revolutionary education

(Cowden & Singh, 2013; Coté, *et al*, 2007; Roggero, 2011; Trifonas, 2000 and others), and research methods to promote these social changes through the working together of academics and activists are also being produced (Casas-Cortes & Cobarrubias, 2007; Shukaitis & Graeber 2007; Schostak & Schostak, 2008, 2013, among others). These works have contributed to my thinking about how the grand action research cycle may be formed, through the political and socially conscious work of all those who wish to see change. It is hoped, then that the two aspects of this work described here, the 'grand action research cycle' and the sense in the research of proximity to the subject, or of being there, will allow for several things: Firstly, it is hoped that they will create a greater connection between research activities and the events/happenings/phenomena they attend to by personalising accounts, and by creating the theoretical 'room' for new conversations to take place between academe and activists. This connection ensures that research does not become purely extractive. Secondly, it hopes to allow the importance of research as 'really useful knowledge' (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007) to be seen by activists and community members, by showing that research can be useful to those outside of academe, that research could be seen as something that they can use to create stronger and more efficient movements for change. In turn, creating a theory/action praxis, which, I argue, has the possible potential to have a plethora of positive outcomes, possibilities such as better relations between academe and the social world; an increasingly intellectual public; greater and more participatory democratic structures; and of particular interest in this work, a more socially just organisation of educative and pedagogical activities. All of the ideas listed

above will be discussed throughout this work and constitute the hope for a better future that it contains.

Chapter Three: Setting the Scene

3.1 The Spaces of Potential Hope

In this chapter, I will introduce the case study of Occupy and the other two supplementary sites. This is felt to be needed to give the reader further context from which to understand the situatedness of the work because the rest of the work, including the theoretical exploration, is grounded on an understanding of the sites, particularly Occupy London. The key features of this situatedness are the current socio-political climate that gave rise to Occupy and the educational response they gave, the dissatisfaction with the neoliberal university and the responses from the two supplementary sites and, in addition, the notion that all three sites are connected by their stated desire to do education differently and to teach politically. This grounding potentially allows an understanding of the way the organisations used are currently constituted and what claims are being made about and by them.

The three sites in this study are not given equal weighting as my original interest was in the organic and popular education of Occupy and this has remained my main focus and where my theory is grounded. I shall talk more about the nature of Occupy as a case study in Chapter Four, however, suffice to say here that although I knew from the beginning that I wanted to understand what was happening pedagogically in Occupy, I did not initially know where the boundaries of my study would be. I felt that I wanted to get to know the phenomenon that Chomsky (2012) had described as

‘unprecedented’ and allow the emergent questions that would inevitably come from that understanding and exploration to guide the boundaries of the ‘case’. Having allowed this organic interpretation to happen, I defined the intrinsic case study boundaries as Occupy London and the London Stock Exchange (LSX) camp outside St. Paul’s Cathedral specifically.

In this section, I want to explore the data in a purely descriptive manner; to encourage a ‘picture’ of the phenomena under investigation to emerge to help enable a more detailed understanding of how the theory was generated.

3.2 Occupy LXS (London Stock Exchange)

Walking around the site, with its convivial atmosphere and bustling activity was inspirational. A few things stood out immediately that gave the whole site a jovial aspect. There were banners and flags, some banners had serious messages: ‘capitalism is crisis’ or ‘the banks got bailed out, we got sold out’. Some more tongue in cheek: an English Heritage style blue plaque with ‘Real democracy reborn here October 2011’ displayed upon it, a street sign saying ‘Tahir Square EC4M, City of Westminster’ and a giant ‘Monopoly’ board (rumoured to have been dropped off in the night by the infamous artist Banksy). There was the big Tent City University marquee off to one side and a large info tent welcoming you into the square. I could hear the constant noise of conversations, drums, music, the clattering of pots and pans. The camp was a surreal interruption in the lives of those who passed through the square, whilst I was there I saw people in smart suits who looked so incongruent but had obviously gotten used to the camps presence; tourists taking pictures; people discussing and debating with the occupiers and even a wedding party that pulled up in a stretch limousine, the woman in an expensive full white gown, going to get married in St. Paul’s and stopping as she went to have her wedding photos taken in Tent City.

(Fieldwork notes, 2011)

Occupy, globally, intrigued me. It is said that it ‘happened’ in September 2011, the exact date of the beginning of the global movement is ambiguous,

as is its origin. Globally, Occupy was initially thought to have been launched in the U.S.A. by a Canadian activist magazine: *Adbusters* (Gamson & Sifry, 2013: 159), with their question ‘are you ready for a Tahrir moment?’ referring to the protest camp, or the movement of the Squares, in Tahrir Square, Egypt. Another, less spectacular explanation is that a meeting was held in New York with a multi-national group of anti-capitalist activists planning an action of physical occupation of public space (Kroll, 2011: 16) that would later catch on in “over 951 cities in 82 countries” (Jaramillo, 2012: 67; Thorpe, 2013: 226-7). The first Occupy encampment was in Zucotti Park, New York City as close to Wall Street as was possible (see Chomsky, 2012; Jaramillo, 2012; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012; Van Stekelenburg, 2012, among others). Noam Chomsky (2012) described Occupy Wall Street, as this first encampment was called, as “an extremely exciting development. In fact, it’s kind of spectacular. It’s unprecedented. There has never been anything like it that I can remember” (Chomsky, 2012: 24), an opinion that seemed to resonate widely, which made investigation of Occupy even more inviting. Occupiers and commentators alike insisted that it had taken at least some inspiration from other encampment protests around the world, including the student occupations of 2010 against the fee rises in the UK; the so-called ‘Arab Spring’ movements and the M15 and *Indignados* in Spain and the uprisings in Greece (Glasius & Pleyers, 2013; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012; Thorpe, 2013, etc.). Some of the global camps lasted for “less than a day, some of them for months ensuring that Occupy has become, if not a new political force per se, at least a new socio-political problematic that demands attention” (Thorpe, 2013: 226-7). According to Halvorsen (2012: 427), “Occupy London represents one of the longest lasting examples of Occupy

camps in the world”, the important word there is ‘camps’, the physical encampment was one of the longest lasting, whether Occupy London endured in any other way is debateable. However, it is to Occupy London Stock Exchange that I attend.

Something that is perhaps important to understand about Occupy, is that they were insisting, at the time of my fieldwork, that the point of reference for the discontents was not the state or politics conventionally defined. There seemed at the time to be no desire to take over the state or to create a new party. The Occupy movement claims to reject this form of representative politics, focussing instead on people taking control of their own lives and expanding the democratic spaces in which they live and work (Sitrin, 2012: 75). Therefore, a question emerges regarding what the ‘Occupy movement’ signifies. Is the ‘movement’ an empty signifier for a multitude of discontents? Is Occupy a movement or an event? And what, apart from the physical place is actually being ‘occupied’ by taking part? These questions will be addressed in various parts of the thesis (most notably in Chapter Six) as they are a central part of the politics of Occupy and therefore its pedagogy.

According to Pickerill and Krinsky (2012: 279 and backed up by my own interviews, see section 6.2 for example), for many people who joined a camp or Occupy group, the movement started at the “moment when resistance to the inequalities of capitalism finally emerged: a tipping point in which the unfairness of bank bailouts juxtaposed against rising personal poverty triggered a moment of clarity of the absurdity of the current economic and political system” (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 279). Chomsky describes the Occupy movement as “the first major public response to thirty years of class

war” (Chomsky, 2012: 9). Even if one is to accept the notion of ‘thirty years of class war’, questions still emerge here about the ‘public’. Who are this ‘public’, how are they constituted and where did they come from? Are they a homogenous ‘mass’ as in ‘the masses’, or are they ‘the people’? Debates about the nature of the ‘public’ that responded through Occupy can be seen in Hardt and Negri’s book *Declaration* (2012), which builds on the work in *Multitude* (2004). Hardt and Negri’s view of the new ‘multitude’ described in *Declaration* goes some way to answering this question, other debates (for example, Lippman, 1927; Schostak and Schostak 2013) regarding how publics are constituted and what their collective power may or may not be will also be touched upon throughout this work, particularly in discussion of Occupy London (Chapter Six) and the Social Science Centre (Chapter Seven), as this is a problematic concept. However, for now a working definition of what I mean by ‘public Space’ may be useful: Public spaces are the areas seen as being designated for public use, that is that they allow for freedom of passage through a place, where people can meet, assemble and travel without contravening any laws, even when they are often privately owned.

Occupy globally claimed to, and indeed seemed to, illuminate issues about ‘public space’ and whether such a thing actually exists anymore and how these contested spaces are managed and controlled. This is partly because most of (but not all) the Occupy movements around the world confront power by occupying this so called public space with urban tent camps (Van Stekelenburg, 2012). Of course, as stated, this work concentrates on Occupy London, and in particular the encampment at St. Paul’s known as Occupy LSX, therefore it is worth noting that this is the Occupy action that I am

talking about when I talk of Occupy. The larger, globalised movement, was, of course, much more complex and varied in the multi-various actions and attitudes (for example see literature written about Occupy such as Byrne, 2012; Lunghi & Wheeler, 2013; van Gelder, 2011; Khatib, *et al*, 2012, all collections of stories from various Occupy camps and actions. In addition there are many scholarly articles, for example Campbell, 2011; Gamson & Sifry, 2013; Gledhill, 2012).

However, on the subject of public space, the occupiers who set up the Occupy London camp made a failed attempt to occupy Paternoster Square outside the Stock Exchange, this seemed to go some way to facilitating a realisation, at least among the activists and their supporters that “the financial corporate world was not only off limits to most, economically and socially, but also quite literally” (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 280). The closure of the ‘public’ Paternoster Square, or the “fortifying of the space with police, private security and metal barriers”, was a moment when, to some, the “real nature of this ‘public’ space was revealed – only a very specific type of public is welcome, and their activities are restricted to those of work and consumption” (Köksal, 2012: 447). This failed attempt at setting up the encampment in the, according to my research, desired and most politically strategic site also shows the extent to which Rancière’s (2011) ‘police order’ - the combined social pressures that arise in the interactions of all members and agencies of a given society - underpin the movement of people but can be countermanded; the site, despite the usually available free access across this private square, made possible by the ‘police order’ of social pressures to have privatised areas of the city remain open for public access, was controlled not by law enforcement officers, but by private security firms

employed by the financial institutions, disrupting the usual police order and revealing the extent to which the use of laws and their enforcers can be utilised by a new order to protect private property. This can be seen especially when the police order dictates that, as Köksal insists, 'activities are restricted to those of work and consumption'. For many, the private agencies of civil enforcement, assisted by the public agencies of law enforcement, reinforced this police order of the 'restricted activities' this site was publically available for. However, for the activists, these agencies overstepped the boundaries of the normative police order by denying public access to a public right of way across private property. These restrictions on movement and interruption to the normative police order are enforced, in this case by private security guards, but also more generally by the state police through the use of militarised tactics and 'non-lethal' weaponry, the use of which, such as Pepper Spray, has been highly publicised, for example in the Occupy Oakland protests (USA Today, 2011).

By disturbing the normal flows and uses of space, the Occupiers went some way to bringing to light the underlying force of the police order (Rancière, 2011) by publicising the denial of public access across Paternoster Square and by interrupting the flow of business and commerce across the Square outside St. Paul's Cathedral as well as creating counter cartographies, discussed below. In addition this exposed the legal structures and mechanisms used to control these flows. In turn, it then disrupted and illuminated the discourses of 'rights' to public spaces and of manufactured 'publics' that show what is at stake for states, elites and those citizens that attempt to develop democratic politics, policies and ways of organising (Hardt & Negri, 2004, 2009, 2012; Harvey, 2000, 2012; Lefort, 1998).

Occupy's examination of this included producing counter-cartographies, in which cityscapes were used and mapped for activities alternative to that of commerce and control⁷ (Köksal, 2012), city tours (Occupy London LSX, 2011) and protests wherein the space would be put to an alternative use, such as dancing, picnicking or teach-outs (Chomsky, 2012; Köksal, 2012; Occupy London LSX, 2011).

As can be assumed, just from these two central points about Occupy "it is not a simple movement, not a single issue, but instead embodies the frustration and energy that many of us have with the way society is organised" (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 286), suggesting that it may be possible/desirable for a more emancipatory and communal 'police order' to be brought to bear. The complexity seems to arise further when attention is turned toward how the LSX camp was physically organised: the largest structure on site was a marquee, displaying the words, *Tent City University* (TCU) in large letters. This marquee had a space for workshops and a library. Halvorsen (2012: 428), who was active within Occupy London as well as researching it, adds that "Tent City University ... has provided a diverse range of seminars and discussions, as well as the facilitated 'teach outs' in front of banks", there were indeed a large number of speakers and guests, from many professions at TCU, their diversity, when it comes to political standpoints, however, is perhaps in doubt. However, education was a large aspect of the camp, as my interviews with Occupiers revealed; "we wanted to get educated about the issues as well as educating others"; "TCU was a

⁷ One such counter cartography produced by a Graduate Student at Lincoln University, Gary Saunders, uses Google Maps to link alternative education initiatives around the world: <https://maps.google.co.uk/maps/ms?msid=205692666716190562589.0004d8e98dce56ca5dc86&msa=0&dg=feature>

priority as people wanted to know more about what was going on and an alternative university seemed like a really good thing to have on site”; “I’ve learnt loads, TCU has been really good for creating the space for that learning to happen”.

It could be argued from the data I collected that, for many of the people, learning was a defining aspect of the camps; having the power and freedom to know, to reflect, to think, but also to enact. It seemed that personal stories were being ‘uploaded’ to the collective knowledges to assist the understanding of the crisis and how it affected people. Therefore, according to my study data, the issues being protested and the Occupiers enactment of learning became central in their experiments with democracy, referred to variously as direct/deliberative/consensus democracy, all these labels technically correct for the decision making processes that occurred in the camps. This potential enactment of learning through direct and participatory democracy made possible in Occupy implied the question of whether the assertion of the right to free association is the best way to learn new social relationships. Does this allow for real reflection, and although the learning about democracy is taking place, what else is being learnt/(re)created/(re)established? The discussion on this point will be picked up in Chapter Six.

The main tool of this enactment of learning, this trialling of alternative forms of democracy seemed to be the General Assembly (GA), I heard many stories about how influential the GAs were in people’s thinking. On the surface at least, they seemed to work very well as a democratic tool:

in the first few weeks of the camps, the daily general assemblies of Occupy London Stock Exchange became efficient enough to

disseminate information, discuss and adopt practical decisions during the first part of the meeting, by then attended by over 200 people, while the second part of the meeting was dedicated to broader political or strategic issues

(Glasius & Pleyers, 2013: 557)

The GAs were well attended from the start of Occupy LSX (as can be seen from the GA minutes available on the Occupy London Website and from the many photographs that circulate on Internet feeds and can easily be found through Google Images) and although they had their problems (which will be discussed in Chapter Six), they were generally convivial and productive. According to several occupiers, the GAs were “exciting places to be, where you felt anything could happen”, “GAs allowed people to express their political opinions, we got a lot of things decided about the camp and about what it was we wanted”, and “I really found my voice at the GAs, they were what made Occupy different”. These views about the GAs were supported by the minutes (Occupy London LSX, 2011), which were taken during the GAs and later uploaded onto the web site, although these minutes are in note form and therefore may not give a complete picture of the full proceedings. Even so, one of the striking aspects about the GAs was the practice of the ‘human microphone’: the words of any speaker were re-spoken in waves across the crowd in order for everyone present to hear; which did become one of the visible and moving forms of cooperation within the movement in both London and New York: As Chomsky (2012: 57) reports, speaking predominately about Occupy Wall Street, but with reference to other encampments, “one of the striking features of the movement has simply been the creation of cooperative communities – something very much lacking in an atomised, disintegrated society – that include general

assemblies that carry out extensive discussions, kitchens, libraries, support systems and so on. All of that is a work in progress leading to community structures that, if they can spread out into the broader community and retain their vitality, could be very important". Halvorsen (2012: 428) explains that, "Occupy London ... formed dozens of autonomous working groups, focussing on everything from practical issues, such as kitchens and first aid to groups discussing alternative economic models and links between the financial crisis and the environment". It was apparently these working groups that formed the backbone of the movement and brought proposals to the GAs for deliberation and decisions. This prefiguration (the nature of which shall be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six) of alternative politics was felt to be one of the most exciting aspects of the movement, this was because as Sitrin (2012: 74) identifies,

the Occupy movements ... purpose is not to determine 'the' path that a particular country should take but to create a space for a conversation in which all can participate and in which all can determine together what the future should look like. At the same time these movements are trying to prefigure that future society in their present social relationships

This included providing services, such as the ones mentioned earlier:

libraries, first aid, kitchens and education, etc. as Pickerill and Krinsky (2012: 283) explain,

many camps explicitly sought to circumvent traditional providers of services and rather than make demands simply to create alternatives. By establishing temporary tent communities with kitchens, bathrooms, libraries, first-aid posts, information centres, sleeping areas and educational space, they recreated new spaces of provision: prefigurative alternative communities with very few resources. ... In particular there was significant focus on alternative education.

The provision of these services however, did reportedly lead to friction in the movement as certainly some of the people I spoke to thought that Occupy were providing (or creating anew) services that the government ought to supply. For some, including some occupiers I spoke to, however, this was part of the reason that they came to the camps in the first place: the cuts to public services through austerity measures imposed by the UK Conservative/ Liberal Democrat coalition government (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). This issue arose, according to many of the people I spoke to, partly because the camps attracted many homeless people and people with mental health or drug issues. These people were not turned away because the Occupiers, both during my conversations with them and more publically in their statements, acknowledged that for the camp to be fully inclusive, it had to cater for anyone that came along. One Occupier told me that “we have some problems with people who are mentally ill, or have drug or alcohol problems, but if we ask them to leave, we are not being inclusive are we? But if we let them stay, we’re providing services that we’re not really equipped to provide, it’s really complicated to know how to feel...”

The albeit problematic inclusion of these services and the reported inclusivity of the camp itself meant that what Occupy were potentially doing, in effect, was to create “institutions operating on anarchist principles of mutual aid and self-organisation – a genuine attempt to create the new society in the shell of the old” (Graeber, 2011: 4). These principles, that will be examined further in the main discussion of Occupy in Chapter Six, were apparently carried further by the political organisation of the camp, its main identity, one might say, that of horizontalism: the desire to put an end to all hierarchies and authority - the state, capitalism, patriarchy, racism - and establish a truly free

and equal society. Horizontalism has, on the surface, been a key aspect of many post-Seattle movements according to several scholars (Solnit & Solnit, 2010; Thomas, 2000). As Gitlin (2013: 8) explains, “at the core of Occupy was an identity, however absurd it appeared to be to the outside. It prided itself on a famously horizontal style, a will towards cooperative commonwealth, a repertory of rituals and repertoires of playful, sometimes confrontational action”. Sitrin (2012: 74) adds that “[horizontalism] was seen as a tool to create more participatory and freer spaces for all – a process of awakening and empowerment”, this speaks to the inclusivity aspect of the movement, as does probably their most famous slogan, that of ‘We are the 99%’.

It is argued here, as elsewhere that the ‘we are the 99%’ slogan, whether accurate or not, was an incredibly powerful slogan as it “immediately created a sense of inclusion and majority” (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 281) because it “resonated with the larger public that was severely disillusioned with political-economic establishments widely seen as having superintended the economic breakdown of 2008 and then having thrived with impunity” (Gitlin, 2013: 10).

Gitlin also reminds us however, that

the Occupy movements terminology (1%, 99%) entered into popular lore so readily because it summed up, albeit crudely, the sense that the wielders of power are at once arrogant, self-dealing, incompetent, and incapable of remedying the damage they have wrought; and that their dominance constitutes a moral crisis that can only be addressed by a moral awakening

(2013: 9)

Chomsky (2012: 69-70) argues that “one of the really remarkable and almost spectacular successes of the Occupy movement is that it has simply

changed the entire framework of discussion of many issues”. Or perhaps as Ardit (2012: 1, my Italics) comments, these types of events “*are the plan* in the sense that they make a difference by moving the conversation, they are political performatives – participants start to experience what they strive to become – and vanishing mediators or passageways to something other to come”. Chomsky goes on to say that, this is because “there were things that were sort of known, but in the margins, hidden, which are now right up front – like the imagery of the 99 percent and the 1 percent”. This, coupled with “the dramatic facts of the sharply rising inequality over the past roughly thirty years, with the wealth being concentrated in actually a small fraction of the 1 percent of the population”, meant in just that one slogan Occupy had potentially unveiled an issue that included such a large majority that it was almost completely inclusive. Chomsky asserts that “this has made a very heavy impact on the ridiculous maldistribution of wealth”. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it has had an impact upon *the debate about* the maldistribution of wealth, as Gitlin (2013) and others would argue. For example, one Occupier wrote that

what the Occupy movement COULD do was to start conversations. We, the people, could just ignore the 1% for a minute, get together for a chat and say, ‘This isn’t really working out for us, is it? What kind of world do we want to live in? and how do we get there?’ And that is what seemed to be happening quite naturally. People wanted to come and tell us their stories, and we listened (some of us).....they talked about their hopes for the future. We felt the mood was growing, and it was with us

(Anonymous⁸, 2012: 442)

Moreover, as Van Stekelenburg (2012: 227) insists,

⁸ The author here wished to remain anonymous as s/he was writing about the negative aspects of one Occupy camp and feared there may be retribution for these actions.

one should not only consider the relatively small number of people who camped out, but also the much larger number of people who came to the protest site for a rally, or made a donation on line, or sent a petition supporting the activists right to remain on the site. These people shared a collective identity with the protesters, one they gained from blog entries, Facebook posts, YouTube videos, online newspaper stories and television reports. Digital media made an imagined community possible

Occupy, like other post-2010 movements, also made extensive use of the Internet, which as current debates suggest, may have produced new forms of politics and for the purposes here, an 'Occupy politic' especially (see for example, Castells, 2012; Hardt & Negri, 2012; McNair, 2011). This was also reported as being instrumental in gaining notoriety for the movement and providing a feeling of global solidarity. However, as Hardt and Negri (2012: 18) state, "the encampment and occupations of 2011 have rediscovered this truth of communication ...that physical proximity matters.... Facebook, Twitter, the Internet, and other kinds of communication mechanisms are useful, but nothing can replace the being together of bodies and the corporeal communication that is the basis of collective political intelligence and action". Therefore, although this was an important part of the movement it will not be discussed at great length in this work as the use of social media in this context is a complex issue which could not be done justice here, and has been extensively written about by others (see for example Gamson & Sifry, 2013). Suffice to acknowledge here that, as Gamson and Sifry (2013: 159) say, "the Occupy movement has made extensive use of a whole panoply of user-generated social media and social networking", which enabled the movement to become supported by various actions globally under the one Occupy signifier and create a positive feeling of global

solidarity and many ideas shares, at least for a time during the encampments of 2011/12 and for some occupiers, long after the camps had gone. There are also discussions to be had regarding the use of technology intended to further the control and repression by the 1% being used to bring down that system of social organisation by turning the technology against them. In this work, however, the attention is on the notion, as Hardt and Negri attest, that the truth of communication is that physical proximity matters. However, what these notions of a global movement with global solidarity existing under one 'name' or 'label' that of Occupy, do evoke, are questions of how solid is Occupy as a political actor and will it in the end 'melt into air' (Berman, 1982; Marx, 1848/2003)? These questions constitute an ongoing theme throughout these discussions.

Solidarity was reportedly very important for Occupy; it was this aspect, along with the learning that took place, which was a constant theme within the movement itself (GA Minutes – Occupy London LSX, 2011) and in my interviews. The solidarity, encompassing the (re)connection of people outside capitalist social relations was apparently evident in the LSX camp, at least on the surface:

I was excited about the idea of a protest where we would not go home at the end of the day, but where we would remain for as long as we deemed necessary. Where we would create a space where capitalism could not intrude and real democracy was practiced and where we could plan further actions in an attempt to reclaim our present and the future that we felt was being hijacked

(Köksal, 2012: 446)

we build spaces where you find freedom of imagination...When St. Paul's was there, I was able to avoid money, universities...and all the things people tell me I have to do to have a happy life

(Occupy interviews in Glasius & Pleyers, 2013: 556)

This notion of avoidance, of escapism from what this Occupier calls ‘all the things people tell me I have to do’ is interesting and poignant as on the one hand it speaks of mere escapism, which does not constitute a countervailing practice. On the other hand, it speaks of having the space and freedom to associate differently, of providing thinking room, where those countervailing democratic practices and plans can be hatched.

Jaramillo (2012: 69) expresses those feelings and the impression I certainly absorbed from my visits to the camp like this:

there is a message that the Occupy movement clearly conveys: we generate strength in conviviality, reciprocity and mutual supportit signals a break, we could say, a breach from ordinary life occurrences. This break jolts the collective unconscious from its dormant state of mind and through collective displays of protest, creates the conditions for individuals to barreldown the unknown path of revolt, that is, if a tear gas canister does not stop them dead in their tracks.

3.3 The Social Science Centre

The predominant reason, as mentioned in the Introduction, for examining the practices of the Social Science Centre, Lincoln, UK (SSC) is to understand its potential to become an institution of the commons (Hardt & Negri, 2012; Shantz, 2013), to attempt an understanding of whether it can be seen as a new organisational form where education can flourish without the fear of becoming schooled. The SSC could well be considered an emergent institution, consisting of emergent procedures, practices and mechanisms, if taken on face value and uncritical acceptance of the groups’ rhetoric.

Therefore it is important for the purposes of this work to understand whether

it is, or even could be, an emergent institution which not only has the potential to support movements such as Occupy, but gives a countervailing approach to the university in order that it might bridge the gap between the two, through an emerging praxis of theories of radical political practice and a practice of radical political theories. Could it even one day become the normative way of practicing popular education that connects what the university might one day become and sites of struggle in such robust and powerful ways?

The Social Science Centre (SSC) describes itself as “a not-for-profit co-operative ...organised on the basis of democratic, non-hierarchical principles, with all members having equal involvement in the life and work of the SSC” which “offers opportunities to engage in a co-operative experience of higher education” (Social Science Centre, 2012). It has been described by others in various ways; as, for example, a “radical attempt to forge an alternative model of higher education, able to stand independently without being subject to the whims of marketising politicians and managerial bureaucracies” (Carrigan, 2011). The web site describes it as an attempt “to create alternative spaces of higher education whose purpose, societal value and existence do not depend on the decisions of the powerful” (Social Science Centre, 2012). One might be wary of such high ideals and blustery rhetoric; however, the reality seemed, on the surface to at least reflect this in some key ways.

The SSC is very small, it started its first year (the year my fieldwork was conducted) with nine students, everyone gives their time freely, on a voluntary basis, which, according to Mike Neary, a founder member

(conversations with Neary, 2013) can be both problematic and limiting and I would argue brings up issues about volunteerism. However, Neary also told me that the small size of the Centre makes it very productive, as every person involved is able to feel that they are a valuable part of the Centre's work and life. He adds:

[a] sense of imagination and the imaginary extends to the way in which the centre is managed and run, with time set aside to consider the meaning and purpose of the Centre, using the critical concepts developed in the SSC sessions: gender, ethics and power, to build our own sense of collective activity. These critical reflections can lead us to challenge our own working practices, including, and in particular, how power is distributed across the collective and whose knowledge within the group is privileged

(Neary in Class War University, 2013)

These are high ideals indeed and one wonders how successful they are at this. However, Neary and other members of the SSC claim that the often problematic relationship between 'teachers' and 'students' is attended to: "we refer to all members as 'scholars' as a way of dissolving the distinction between academics and students" (conversations with Neary, 2013), this tension, it seems, is not fully resolved however, as members are actually referred to as either 'student scholars' or 'teacher scholars' (SSC conversations, 2013), suggesting that even though a resolution has perhaps been attempted, there is still some essential divide between the two. However, the web site suggests that "one key guiding principle of the centre is that 'teachers' and 'students' have much to learn from each other" (Social Science Centre, 2012), a principle that if practiced in reality, should allow at least the *problematization* of subjugated/privileged knowledge. They also claim that "decisions at general meetings shall be made by consensus"

(Social Science Centre, 2012), which extends all the way from the running of the Centre to planning the curriculum.

The SSC also insists that members see and enact the importance of connecting with space and place as an essential criteria: In an interview in *The Times Higher Education*, Neary insisted that “‘place is the key’, bonding teachers and learners” (Bonnett, 2013). In a conversation with me, he expressed this importance as “I like to think we are reclaiming our right to the city, or occupying the city as a new pedagogy of space and time” (conversations with Neary, 2013) and McAleavey, a founder member of the SSC, argues that “the centre needs to be understood as ‘an active part of the city’ rather than a ‘discrete entity’” (Bonnett, 2013). This idea links in with what Neary calls “an essential characteristic” of the SSC and its activities is that it is “based on direct and personal engagement” (Neary in Class War University, 2013). This engagement, according to Neary and Amsler (2012), extends from the relationships between the scholars in the SSC to the City itself, reclaiming not only the right to the city, but also the public nature of inquiry into the social, how this works in practice seemed unclear to those student scholars I spoke to, but they do often hold their meetings in cafes and other spaces accessible to the public. These principles give rise to the claim on the web site that “our work in co-operative higher learning has the potential to transform the way in which higher education is being imagined, designed and undertaken” (Social Science Centre, 2012).

In addition to the apparent localised relationship to the City of Lincoln and the criteria of connection to space, the constitution states that while “it is important that the Centre works in real places at the heart of its local

community” and works in “a variety of public space across the city” and is “orientated towards work in the social sciences”, it also states that they “hope and expect that similar projects of small-scale, self-funded higher education will be created for different subject areas and in different locations nationally and internationally” (Constitution of The Social Science Centre, Lincoln available at Social Science Centre, 2012). It is then expected by the members of the SSC that “these multi-various Centres can provide a supportive network to further advance such sustainable and resilient forms of higher education”, in other words, in addition to the physical connections to space, place and each other, they hope that, at some future point, connections will be made through networks of others around the country and indeed the globe.

So what exactly do the SSC scholars do?

we’ve run an entry level evening class called ‘The Social Science Imagination’ (after C. Wright-Mills’s 1957 book *The Sociological Imagination*), which is an open course run by and for people who want to develop a critical understanding of the social world through social-scientific inquiry. The class proceeds from scholars’ everyday problematics to theoretical critique. Through this emerging curriculum, we take up Mills’s key challenge: how can individuals who appear powerless change and transform wider social structures in ways that are progressive and humanizing?

(Members of the Social Science Centre, 2013: 66)

It can be seen from the initial project that this does not seem to be a simple HE course. The course does seem to support the argument that they are practicing a “higher learning orientated towards intellectual values of critical thinking, experimentation, sharing, peer review, co-operation, collaboration, openness, debate and constructive disagreement point towards a better future for us all” (Social Science Centre, 2012). Note the description of

'higher *learning*' as opposed to 'higher *education*'; this is because, as Neary insists, "we don't claim to be a university. The title Social Science Centre links us directly to the Social Centre movement that emerged in Europe from the 1970s as radical spaces that sought to provide community based and collective alternatives to state provision, or to the lack of it" (Mike Neary in Class War University, 2013). In addition, the SSC web site states that

the SSC was born in 2010, out of a desire to preserve public space for social science education and research after the present Conservative-Liberal Government withdrew funding for the teaching of social science and other forms of knowledge deemed 'non-essential' in English Universities....We are also concerned that the promises of the university are being impoverished by a system of higher education that is increasingly orientated towards satisfying the perceived needs of business and industry, and that embraces short-termist, highly competitive, profit-driven motives of the capitalist market

(Social Science Centre, 2012)

And Neary further qualifies this by adding that

the SSC is not a demand for the state to provide higher education, but a recognition that revolutionary education cannot be provided by the capitalist state; and, therefore, we have no other option but to establish our own necessary revolutionary alternative form of higher education

(conversations with Neary, 2013)

3.4 Lincoln University and the Student as Producer

Lincoln University's Student as Producer (SaP) initiative is of particular interest to this work as the University posits it as a way of being in political opposition to the student as consumer model of higher education, thus it claims to be practicing a countervailing ideology to the increasingly normative one. This means that for the purpose of the project here, it potentially has the possibility of enacting the trajectory of learning explained earlier. However, it does not go that far yet and nor does it claim to, however, the potential may be there to practice higher education otherwise and introduce the solidarity loop required to complete the desired action research cycle explored within these pages.

The Student as Producer project (2010) at the University of Lincoln is described on the web site as

Restat[ing] the meaning and purpose of higher education by reconnecting the core activities of universities, i.e., research and teaching, in a way that consolidates and substantiates the values of academic life. The core values of academic life are reflected in the quality of students that the University of Lincoln aims to produce. Student as Producer emphasises the role of the students as collaborators in the production of knowledge. The capacity for Student as Producer is grounded in the human attributes of creativity and desire, so that students can recognise themselves in a world of their own design.

It claims to be, moreover, a "policy of ... research-engaged teaching" that is *encouraged* throughout the University's teaching activities and as such is not enacted by all members of the teaching staff. According to the web site (Student as Producer, 2010), there are eight key features of the program:

- Discovery: Student as Producer
- Technology in Teaching: Digital Scholarship
- Space and Spatiality: Learning Landscapes in Higher Education
- Assessment: Active Learners in Communities of Practice
- Research and Evaluation: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
- Student Voice: Diversity, Difference and Dissensus
- Support for research based learning through expert engagement with information resources
- Creating the Future: Employability, Enterprise, Beyond Employability, Postgraduate

The explanation of these features can be found in full on the web site, but for our current purposes an overview of what is meant by them is sufficient. The key features are, it is claimed, aimed at variously creating work that is “collaborative”, “driven by challenging, open ended questions”, making use of formal and informal spaces and ensuring inclusivity and enhanced experience for all involved. Teachers become facilitators of learning and students take ownership of and responsibility for their own work. In this sense, it is claimed that commons are created, both physical and virtual, to enhance opportunities for collaboration and engagement with others outside of the university. Students are apparently encouraged to carry out activities that demonstrate their research skills for assessment, and staff are asked to engage in research into their own pedagogy. According to the literature they produce, there is a great emphasis on student voice, which is “dedicated to developing a community of learners and teachers which is respectful of diversity and difference, allowing for the space of dissensus and disagreement, driven by engaged and participatory pedagogies”.

It has to be remembered, however, especially for our purposes here, that SaP is a funded project⁹ at a traditionally organised university. That is, The University of Lincoln still operates under a top-down hierarchical structure.

⁹ The project is funded by the Higher Education Academy under the National Teacher Fellows Project programme.

Students are still (at the time of writing) paying £9000 per year tuition fees for most courses and the University still has traditional admission policies for its type. The project was made possible by Neary and by the agreement of the University Vice Chancellor, not by the will of the students themselves. It is therefore a very different organisation and pedagogical structure than the other sites and therefore its potential to be more than it currently is, is probably very limited. However, I felt it was important to include it as firstly, it is claimed to be part of the same project as the SSC, of resistance to the neoliberalisation of the university (Neary & Amsler, 2012). Secondly, it could potentially be seen as an emergent form of top-down critical and popular education due to its claimed ethos of resistance, interruption into the normative pedagogical flow and its potential to introduce a more revolutionary form of teaching and learning into existing institutions.

Now with these questions in mind and an understanding of the three sites under investigation I would like to turn to an examination of the role of research itself in Making Hope Possible, in creating a robust and resilient movement for change by contributing to the 'grand action research cycle', and examine the question of how might the researcher understand their role in making change? The next chapter, then, rethinks the role of the researcher and of research, framing the politically underpinned constructivist grounded theory into a bricolage methodology in order to better understand the three sites and their potential in the struggle for a better world.

Chapter Four: Rethinking Research

So what today is frightening? There is much. And in their writing people either address it directly, indirectly or ignore it as if it were not there

(Schostak & Schostak, 2013: vii)

Walking around the camp at St. Paul's it seems that there must be so many stories, so many justifications for being here, so many reasons to come. People are here to learn, that's for sure, but they're also here to commune, to have relationships of whatever kind develops. They are here because their stories need to be told, to each other, to the wider population, and yes, even to researchers. It is a duty then, surely, for us as researchers to capture the stories, to give them flight, to marry them with theory, to validate them in the only way researchers know how, to turn them into knowledge.

(Fieldwork Journal, 2012)

The questions asked in the previous chapter brought up issues concerning the structure of the research. Notions such as what Occupy actually signified and what was being occupied, the idea that the SSC could have the potential to be a revolutionary space of learning and what the possible potential of the Student as Producer project is.

As previously explained, the initial remit of the research was the pedagogy in Occupy, this seemed to me to warrant a case study approach as the space inhabited by the Occupiers seemed to create an intrinsic case (Stake, 1978, 1995, 2000) wherein Occupy London, as the case itself was the focus of the attention, in other words, the case was what was interesting, it was not studied to learn something about something else, but to understand the case itself. Although it could be argued that the case was somewhat an 'instrumental' case study, in that, in studying Occupy in terms of a single

case, a great deal was learnt about the potentials and possibilities of other cases; in the context of this work, alternatively organised pedagogy.

Therefore, although the study began as an intrinsic case study to understand Occupy, it became instrumental when the initial fieldwork was done, as the learning was used to assist in the understanding of the other sites. An additional attraction for me of using a case study approach was that as Adelman *et al.* (1980: 59) insist, the “particular strength” of case studies “lies in their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right”. However, Stake (1995: 2) muddies the waters slightly when exploring the phenomenon of Occupy as he insists that “the case is an integrated system. The parts do not have to be working well, the purposes may be irrational, but it is a system. Thus, people and programs clearly are prospective cases. Events and processes fit the definition less well”. This notion that events and processes fit the definition less well causes some concern when the subtleties and complexities of Occupy are examined, after all they themselves insisted “this is not a protest, this is a process” (Quote taken from a placard at the Occupy LSX camp). However, as Bassey (1999: 27) states, “clearly the generic term ‘case-study’ has a range of meanings” and Sturman (1994: 26) adds that “the distinguishing feature of case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic of wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose collection of traits”. Therefore, although Stake agrees with Eckstein (2000: 123) that “case study is the study of individuals”, within a bounded space, it is these notions of studying the individuals within the bounded space that create Sturman’s ‘wholeness’ and Stake’s ‘integrated systems’ that indicate the use of case study in the exploration of Occupy. However, it may be important to think anew about these notions of

'wholeness' and 'integrity' in this particular case. The bounded site here, as well as being a physical place, bounded in a practical sense, is a space of contested discourses, a 'bounding' of debates, within the physical space, on the nature of wholeness, the constitution of integrity and contestation of the idea of set human systems. Therefore, the 'belief' assumed about human systems becomes contested and vibrant, rather than static, assured and able to colour the research process.

The physical borders of the case study certainly seemed to consist of the LSX encampment. Within the bounded case however, I wished to seek, as Star (2007: 77) describes, a "methodological place that was faithful to human experience and that would help me sift through the chaos of meanings and produce the eureka of new, powerful explanations", in the newly imagined case this notion of human experience becomes experiences in reaction - in reaction to injustice, to agonism, to difference, where wholeness and integrity melt away to be replaced by countervailing discourses and the utopian imaginary . This description confirmed, in my mind, Kemmis' (1980: 119) point that case study "always reminds us of the active and interventive character of the research process" and further indicated that case study was the appropriate way to think of this project. This was supported, in my opinion, by Adelman *et al.*'s (1980: 60) insistence that "case studies are a 'step to action'. They begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use". In specific educational settings, Stenhouse (1988: 50) has this to add:

educational case study [is where] many researchers using case study methods are concerned ... with the understanding of educational action... They are concerned to enrich the thinking and discourse of educators either by the development of educational theory or by

refinement of prudence through the systematic and reflective documentation of evidence

For me this explanation is important for the 'case study' of Occupy London, but also in the overall thesis, as what is implied here is that the case study of Occupy London allows us to understand educational action and the subsequent extended thought experiment, developed through the other sites, and allows what is here described as enriching the thinking and discourse of educators by the development of educational theory. In addition, it uncovers questions about the nature of the educational act, the political implications of that act and how delimited the thinking about education and its intimate relationship to politics could be.

I would like to think of this chapter as an extended methodology. Extended because it sits alongside a justification of researching social movements as outside researcher, rather than as insider activist. I wished to create a method that Bryant and Charmaz (2007:1) describe as encouraging "researchers' persistent interaction with their data, while remaining constantly involved with their emerging analysis".

When Occupy erupted, they seemed to be performing an educational experiment. This created a natural field of inquiry for me as a student and practitioner of critical pedagogy as they set up and self-organised education, quite purposefully it seemed, without manipulation from experts, which would render the research useless for understanding *organic* pedagogy.

I agree with Clarke and Friese (2007: 364) when they say that "society as a whole can be conceptualised as consisting of ... arenas that are constantly in flux" although for the purpose of this work, it might be helpful to think more in terms of 'process' rather than 'flux'. Clarke and Friese go on to say that "the

arenas framework offers a way of understanding the *ongoing* and *situated organisation of negotiations*: unstable, contingent, hailing how things can be otherwise and maybe soon". Adelman *et al.* (1980: 59) say "the best case studies are capable of offering support to alternative interpretations", this, I have taken to mean both the interpretations the research makes and the interpretations of social relations being attempted through the pedagogy of Occupy. I would argue that this framing further suits the notion of the case study, in that it bounds the social as 'worlds' or 'arenas', which can be examined both separately and in situ. It is also understood here as a way of grounding theory, through a specific method. However, what this research has attempted to do is to borrow from grounded theory method in order to create theory that is grounded through an iterative process within the written theory and data or 'living theory' (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007; Suoranta, 2010). However, it is more the spirit of grounded theory method that has been adopted than the actual method (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), as it is framed in a political manner and takes into account the messiness of life, social action and research as only forms of radical research, here termed as bricolage, can.

If we view the social world/arena of Occupy as a layer, or mosaic, as Clarke and Friese suggested, it is possible that the internal layers might be initially be made visible through the exploration of issues such as, *how* one researches a quickly emerging and evolving phenomenon such as Occupy, from a pedagogical point of view. How can that be done without ignoring such issues as the motivation for the initiation of the project (Graeber, 2011), the politics of such an education (Neary & Amsler, 2012) and the surrounding public and organic pedagogy that was encompassed in the educational

space that was being produced (Lefebvre, 1991)? In addition, I argue that if this emergent pedagogy were to be usefully witnessed, the theories, questions and answers it produced had to be of some *ongoing* use (Jardine, 2006). I felt that the precise research questions would come as I proceeded, grounded in the data, emerging from a critical interest in the pedagogy as a whole. This would happen through reading and re-reading the data and the associated theory, juxtaposing their messages and stories, and keeping track of the thoughts they provoked and the emerging themes they contained. If the social world was as messy and complex as Occupy seemed to suggest it was, I felt that the research needed a paradigm that encompassed the unveiling of the individual life worlds and an ability to juxtapose those stories without subjugating the context of these evolving and intensified subjectivities. A radical way of looking at research seemed to be needed.

Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 31) point out, “no research act or interpretive task begins on virgin territory. Countless acts of meaning-making have already shaped the terrain that researchers explore” so I acknowledge that the decisions made about the research were driven by my own experiences of schooling and education and the tensions that reside there, my experience of social movements and my hope that Occupy was, indeed, something pedagogically and politically different.

I have seen the process of this research as useful witnessing. It has been an empirically grounded thought journey. A journey that takes a line through the entire education spectrum, in snapshot, looking, as Holloway (2010) insists should happen, for the lines of continuity, the cracks between the explosive and easily seen moments of interruption in the normative practices of what

education is often assumed to be. Attempting to connect the dots in the way that the experiences, conversations and fortuitous meetings led me to connect them. This is part of the beginning of the practice of what some (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe et al, 2011) call 'the bricolage'.

This chapter, then, introduces the reader to the form of radical research being employed in this work. Based on a bricolage approach, which encourages multiple ways of seeing from different disciplines, creating a post-disciplinary ethos, and potentially allowing more voices to be heard within the research through a juxtaposition of storytelling and experience. I would argue that this ethos supports the notion of radical democracy as it allows for complexity, contention, imagination and the temporality of knowledges. This form of radical research is employed because it allows an exploration of a mix of the politics and pedagogy that are essential to the way the sites work. It also allows the use of a variety of critical tools, such as the mixture of pedagogical and political theory, imagination and creativity, and a rigorous, radical openness, in order to interpret the politics and pedagogy so that their potential for creating new forms of organisation can be imagined. I will begin with an exploration of what it means to begin the life long process of becoming a bricoleur (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

Marx, writing with Engels, once famously said, 'the philosophers [and here we might include much social science research] have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways: the point, however, is to *change* it' (Marx & Engels, 1846/ 2007, p. 123). This point from Marx, illustrates the attempts of both research activism and bricolage and it is from here that I begin my

explorations of these issues. This notion of assisting, or perhaps even initiating change, led me to an exploration of bricolage as a research methodology that claims at its centre a desire for and a commitment to social change (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe *et al*, 2011). Bricolage is the name for just one of the methodologies that claims this commitment; there are other modes of radical research (Brydon-Miller, 2009; Denzin, 2010; Schostak & Schostak, 2008, 2013; Shukaitis, Graeber & Biddle, 2007). I also felt that the research method should complement the phenomena under investigation (Earl, 2013) and thus turned to this radical approach to create symmetry between object and method.

It is a *beginning* of bricolage I am attempting and would not make any claims, as yet, to being a fully-fledged bricoleur. Kincheloe and Berry (2004) insist, to be a bricoleur one must be fully conversant with multiple methodologies and multiple ways of viewing, adding theoretical and empirical knowledges along the way. They also stress that “bricolage implies the fictive and imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research” (p. 1), elements that I shall utilise. This approach also lies at the heart of carrying out a bricolage study as Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 3) state:

bricoleurs understand that their interaction with the objects of their inquiries is always complicated, mercurial, unpredictable and, of course, complex. Such conditions negate the practice of planning research strategies in advance. In lieu of such rationalisation of the process, bricoleurs enter into the research act as methodological negotiators.

The conception of bricolage emerged from research conducted into critical pedagogy (Denzin, 2010; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe *et al*. 2011), my theoretical home, therefore making it easier for me to understand and put

into practice. I have therefore needed to add to my foundation of critical pedagogy and popular education other disciplinary knowledges as I have discovered their relevant insights. This has meant that whilst bricolage, as conceived here, is a *multidisciplinary* approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe *et al*, 2011), or what Schostak and Schostak (2008) might call “post-disciplinary”, as the research hopes to “maintain a radical openness...a more encompassing approach” (p. 8), it could actually be conceived as also *transdisciplinary*. It attempts to be a pursuit that it is “inquiry-driven rather than discipline driven”, with “the stress on the construction of knowledge” and “the focus on the interrelationship between knowing, doing, being and relating” (Montuori, 2008: xi). I have attempted, as Schostak and Schostak (2013: 15) suggest should be done, to allow the “discourses that could only be heard elsewhere”, in the spaces between the tents in Tent City, or the under the canvas of TCU, to be heard in my work in order to “bring to the fore a newly opened space, a new agenda”. These voices were the voices of individuals who wanted change, who began with Holloway’s (1995, 2003, 2005) scream and moved into the square outside St. Paul’s. They began to constitute a Multitude, in Hardt and Negri’s (2004) terms, wherein they expressed the desire for a world of equality and freedom, they not only called for an open and inclusive democratic society but also experimented with the means for providing it. They became what Schostak and Schostak (2013) call a textual public, a public that creates its own intertextuality through the spaces it creates and the discourses it explores. Those spaces are further composed in writing, such as this thesis, and it is the hope that those spaces will be further (de/re)composed in other and future texts: infiltrating the conversations,

discussions and debates of everyday life, creating a juxtaposition between the politics of dissent and the politics of everydaylife. This is the intertextual composition of this work, by necessity it is inter/post disciplinary in order to (de/re)compose the public text of Occupy.

It is due to these efforts, this attempt; the multidisciplinary approach with a trans/post-disciplinary ethos, and the commitment to assisting change and creating countervailing discourse through reporting the voices absent from the normative discourse, that I feel justified to declare that I have begun the journey towards bricoleur. To endeavour to capture what Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 17) call generating “questions previously unimagined”, unimagined by those providing the case study and other sites and unimagined at the start of this enquiry. I have chosen, in this work, to refer to the elastic boundaries of bricolage as post-disciplinary, considering the context.

Learning in social movements has, of course, been studied before, most notably by authors such as John Holst (2002) and Bud Hall (2012). However, this research attempts to take this study in a different direction to look at the flow lines (Holloway, 2010), the attempts at change and the nature of the apparently politicised pedagogy, between the organic pedagogy in Occupy, the claimed cooperative pedagogy in the SSC and the institutionalised productive ethos to the pedagogy of Lincoln University as parts of a line of continuity. The exploration of this line of continuity is the reason bricolage was chosen as a guiding methodology because I would argue, as Denzin (2010: 15) does that we are all indeed, “interpretive bricoleurs stuck in the present working against the past as we move into a politically charged and

challenging future”. Bricolage, as I will argue, allows for this interpretation, allows for the playful and thought provoking examination of the politically charged and challenging future, thus potentially adding to the discourses on change and becoming an exercise in useful witnessing and producing useful knowledge.

So what *exactly* is bricolage? The etymology of the word from the Oxford English Dictionary (2007: 291) is from the French: The Bricoleur who does odd jobs, who tinkers about, or bricolage: “construction or creation from whatever is immediately available for use”. Bricolage as methodology however goes beyond the dictionary definition, it has that element of the activist using whatever is at hand; and thus similarly, the researcher uses whatever is at hand in the fieldwork experience to focus research activity and construct understandings through engaging with a multiplicity of sources. It contains the elements of what Shukaitis and Graeber (2007: 11) call ‘militant co-research’, in that it has “Thoughts. Provocations. Explorations.” and is a form of “investigation and social research that expand[s] possibilities for political action, proliferating tactics of resistance through the constituent power of the imagination”. These are some common aspects of various descriptions of bricolage: imagination, provocations, explorations and possibilities for political action (Denzin, 2010; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe *et al.* 2011; Kincheloe & Tobin, 2006; Lincoln, 2001; Pinar, 2001 among others). They are also constituents of other radical research methodologies (Denzin, 2010; Howe & MacGillivray, 2009; Schratz & Walker, 1995; Schostak & Schostak, 2008, 2013; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006, to name but a few). Due to the eclectic nature of bricolage, I will attempt to encompass the thinking of several authors of radical research methods

under the title of bricolage for expedience and simplicity, and of course, continuity. I argue that I am 'permitted' to do this, as bricolage is both subversive (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) and transgressive:

transgression generally refers to discursive actions which cross boundaries or violate limits.... Transgressions that are permitted or escape the notice and discipline of boundary-policing authorities push the boundaries further (toward those resisting or away, depending on the eventual response of the authorities). In other words, transgression redefines lines of distinction, giving new meaning to identities and social practices

(Foust, 2010: 3)

It is my view that the bricoleur needs to be open to being both subversive and transgressive in bricolage's post-disciplinary approach as "the strict disciplinarian operating in a reductionistic framework chained to the prearranged procedures of a monological way of seeing is less likely to produce frame shattering research than the synergised bricoleur" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 76). I would argue that it is necessary, at this current socio-political juncture that 'frame shattering' research is produced, that the background is framed in order to transgress that frame (Schostak & Schostak, 2013); otherwise, research potentially becomes a reproductive endeavour and loses its radical edge. However, Schostak and Schostak (2008: 14) ask, "is it really possible to see radically?" I feel that the question is pertinent because as Schostak and Schostak go on to say, "being radical implies some counter-stance to the world as it is, a stance that is active, engaged and committed to bringing about change. But this demands some conception of the world as it 'should' be and where 'I' am in it". This research, carried out under bricolage's post-disciplinary ontology, attempts this. This

vision of the counter-stance starts at the point where the topic for research is chosen:

even the decisions researchers make about what to study reflect ... political and ideological dynamics.....the problems and issues that are chosen by researchers are marked by subjective judgements about whose problems are deemed important

(Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 34)

In my case, my understanding was that Occupy told the social world that the problems of the 99% were important and that we should do something *educational* about it - that to me was worth exploring, ideologically and politically. I understood this unfolding 'event', 'protest', 'occupation', whatever you wish to call it, as an organic curriculum, unfolding in public, with a dynamic that was worth listening to, observing, studying and understanding. Not just for itself but also for its wider implications about, and tensions with, schooling. So what does a person, failed by the school system do? A person who has felt the blow of inequality and misfitting (Hardt & Negri, 2012; Holloway, 2010; Merrifield, 2011a) in the system that is provided to help us conform? Perhaps they raise campaigns about their unequal status, I know I did, perhaps they feel a 'calling' to join others who misfit? Perhaps the very system that fails so many people creates Hardt and Negri's (2004) 'Multitude', the very people that can, and may, make a difference. Perhaps. However, perhaps, for many there is no such calling, just a future of trying to better conform? The mantras of control and hegemony fixed in their minds; consume and accumulate until you are full, which we will make sure you never are. My answer was to turn to researching those who join the Multitude and attempt to become revolutionary subjects (Hardt & Negri, 2012) and attempt to share their stories and assist their development.

The case study of Occupy in this work, seemed to suggest that schooling, or a lack of it, was at least in part producing the very Multitude that Hardt and Negri talk about as the revolutionary subject. As one Occupier put it “you probably don’t want to talk to me, I’ve had no education at all really. Mind you I was reading Chomsky and thinking about what Castells said the other day.....” (conversations with Occupiers). I met many people at Occupy who had not been ‘successful’ enough at school to be taught not to question, not to be non-conformist, not to be critical thinkers, so they did not know it was ‘wrong’. Perhaps it is their stories that can create that juxtaposition between politics and education? However, there is a caution here, not to romanticise Occupy as a movement of the unschooled. A great deal of the occupiers were graduates of the system, students from all levels of formal educational, however, as shall be discussed in Chapter Six, there were differences between the successfully schooled and the (mis)educated.

Denzin (2009: 215) insists that “it is necessary to re-engage the promise of qualitative research as a form of radical democratic practice. ...Today we understand that we write culture and that writing is not an innocent practice”. I would always similarly argue that writing cannot be innocent; writing is done for a reason, to convince, to explore, to convert. In this case, my narrative hopes to encourage thoughts of alternatives, to create debate, to “identify a transgressive alternative [which] invites us to consider more (or robustly debate) a broader range of effective resistance at a time in which resistance is becoming more eclectic and more necessary” (Foust, 2010: 9). From my point of view, my individual experience, education and research acts are an attempt to be part of that ‘effective resistance’ and the post disciplinary

nature of bricolage allows exploration of education to be 'eclectic' therefore potentially rendering it 'more necessary'.

4.1 Grounding the Theory

Going into the field, as methodological negotiator was difficult, I didn't really know exactly what I wanted to know. It was a strange feeling, I wanted to know what they knew, what they were experiencing and then I wanted to put that together with what I knew, what others knew, what thinkers had thought. There just seemed to be too much going on for me to fence it in with theoretical judgements, I wanted to understand their experience through my human senses. I wanted to use those senses, rather than my intellect to understand. And what an assault on the senses it was, there was a feeling of being lost and found all at the same time. A feeling of things in flux, in process, it was edgy and exciting, but the progress was slow and the debates sometimes heated, sometimes stunted. They knew so much, more than I did about politics, about economics, sometimes it was frightening. The job of sifting through the experiences I was hearing and having myself for something coherent was going to be a real task. It looked like the theories I call home are at work, coming alive, being real. But what theories, and how? In general the theories I was hearing through the stories of lived experience were those of a broad critical pedagogy, but there was sometimes more, sometimes less. I would have to find a few in-depth theories and paradigms just to make sense of what was going on.

(Fieldwork journal 2012)

In this complex context we understand that even when we use diverse methods to produce multiple perspectives on the world, different observers will produce different interpretations of what they perceive. Given different values, different ideologies, and different positions in the web of reality, different individuals will interpret what is happening differently

(Kincheloe & Tobin, 2006: 7)

The process of engaging in the research and attempting to follow the bricolage methodology was complex. I borrowed a grounded theory principle at the beginning, that of entering the field without first deciding on a theoretical framework. I knew roughly what I was looking for, and wanted to

be open to finding, or discovering something else, so I entered the field with that as my plan. I was armed with a camera to record the visual images, in case they were the most telling medium; a digital voice recorder to capture, not only voices but also ambient sound in case that was illuminating; a note pad and pen, to write, to draw, to doodle if necessary what I felt, heard, saw and experienced, and I wondered in. This, I felt was the freedom of bricolage, I could discover as stranger, with no vested interest in this piece of information or that. I wondered around, I took photographs (these images served as a personal memory jogger in the end), I made notes and I was able to conduct interviews because some of the people wanted to talk.

After this first round of 'getting lost' in order to find something unexpected, I started to look more seriously at the theory, what theory was it that gave me the most insight into what I had discovered. I felt that Bricolage allowed me to understand the theory through the data and the data through the theory as I mixed the collecting and collating of each right through the research period, in this way I attempted to ensure that the exploration of each was grounded in the other. One event/discovery/happening led me onto the next and I was able to understand that I could never reach the end of the discovery, but that what I had discovered was important to the study and would tell me where to look next, what methods to put into practice, what was a scintillating tangent and what was relevant to the story the research was producing. I allowed serendipity to be a guide as much as my planning and careful consideration of where the research was leading. Bricolage allowed me the freedom to wonder/wander and to take every opportunity that presented itself to learn more:

I was informed of a conference where some Occupy people were speaking in London, so off I went down to the British Library for the day. The people that spoke from the movement were instrumental in setting up Tent City University (TCU) so I was excited to hear them speak. Their presentations were interesting but it felt as if there was a great deal more to hear about the processes they went through during the encampment, so I set up a meeting with one of them a few weeks later. That meeting turned into a series of meetings with various people on various topics, the person from the conference set me up with interviews from people who understood Occupy as pedagogical, people who did not and never attended any workshops or talks at TCU and one person who had left the movement disillusioned with the whole thing. This meant I was able to look at what was being learnt from several points of view. Some of the interviews were online, either email or Skype, some face to face over a coffee.

(Fieldwork journal, 2011-2013)

Glaser and Strauss (2009: 4) state, “theory based on data can usually not be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory. Since it is too intimately linked to data, it is destined to last despite its inevitable modification and reformulation”. What Glaser and Strauss are saying here is that their theory is linked to data through a continual process of testing and refining. Employing processes of comparison and contrast, the theory that emerges is the product of systematic testing and therefore grounded in the empirical data. In this study, I have not used a full grounded theory approach, as I shall explore throughout this section. There is, again, a complex ontology at work here; this study does indeed attempt to create theory that is ‘intimately linked to the data’, both pre- and post- full analysis, and one hopes that it is, indeed ‘destined to last’ in some guise. However, I would also welcome its ‘inevitable modification and reformulations’ because one accepts Kincheloe and Berry’s (2004: 100) question of “if reality is shaped by the interaction of countless factors, then how can the bricoleur account for them all?” Further, their answer that “there is no way to account for them all and no way the bricoleur should attempt such a Sisyphean task.

Only a radical reductionist would claim such a feat is possible in her quest for a single, universal truth". Not only that, but also, "bricoleurs must realise that knowledge is always in process, developing, culturally specific and power-inscribed" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 79). Therefore, one of the main reasons for grounding the theory in the data for this research was that as Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 16) insist, bricoleurs should "commit their knowledge work to helping address the ideological and informational needs of marginalised groups or individuals". This meant for this study, one of the essential tasks was to try to understand a way in which the experimental, prefigurative politics and the emergent pedagogy could be integrated together in a coherent way. In effect, the review of the pertinent literature was not so much a traditional literature review but more an attempt to gain insight into the thinking from literature that seemed most closely aligned to the thinking in the movements and to attempt to build a realm of possible practices, organisational structures and their implications, utilising the fictive and imaginative elements of bricolage mentioned earlier. This attempted exploration was achieved through a general reading of the interview transcripts (interview techniques will be discussed further below) and other data sources to attempt to understand what pedagogy was underpinning the immanent politics. Another reason this was felt necessary was the non/post-ideological stance that Occupy was making (see particularly Occupy LSX, 2011a, 2011b), which made understanding which political theory to use to identify the ideology behind the pedagogical methods and curriculum open to interpretation. This led me to the open Marxism of Holloway (2010) and others (for example, Backhouse, 1992; Bonefeld, 1992, 1995; Clarke, 1992; Cleaver, 1992; Della Costa, 1995 Gunn, 1992 and others) and to theories of

commonism (see for example Hardt & Negri, 2009; Neary & Winn, 2012; Shantz, 2013) and also explorations of pedagogy from critical pedagogy (see Freire, various; Giroux, 1988, 2001, 2011; Macrine, 2009; Shor, 1992, 1996; Shor & Freire, 1987 among others) through critical thinking and social movement learning (Brookfield, 2001, 2005; Brookfield & Holst, 2011; Hall, 2012; Holst, 2002 and others), right to the musings of Rancière (1991), in order to attempt to understand and contextualise the happenings in the movement and see any lines of continuity throughout the case studies. These theorists have been used to explain and be exemplars of the pedagogy that was witnessed and as extensions, allowing for the more in-depth analysis of the pedagogy and experiences of the occupiers in the thesis discussion (see Chapters Six and Seven). This attempt to understand, from the struggles of the subjects of the inquiry, wishes to pay homage to their voices as well as being a method of theory generation, because as Shukaitis and Graeber (2007: 37) say about protests and movements, “these moments embody not just practices to adapt and creatively redeploy, but are in themselves ways of understanding the world and forms of research in action”. It therefore made sense to me to explore theory from *their* understanding, or at least my interpretation of it, because both the movement and the research are trying to generate a “politics of the local, and a utopian politics of possibility (Madison 1998) that redress social injustices and imagine a radical democracy that is not yet (Weems 2002: 3)” (Denzin, 2010: 15). It is also argued here, as in Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 6), that “while empirical research is obviously necessary, its process of production constitutes only one step of a larger and more rigorous process of inquiry. Bricolage subverts the finality of the empirical act”. In this work, this

subversion, initiates a 'conversation' between the data and the immanent theory, creating a dialectic relationship, an intertextuality, wherein one dialogues with the other, until some sense of understanding is reached. This acceptance of 'some sense' of understanding is encompassed by the notion that "the most important social, psychological and educational problems that confront us are untidy and complicated" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 33). In addition, Whitehead and McNiff (2006: 41) insist "the work needs to show its own generative potential, in that new learning emerges from previous learning, and any new learning already holds within itself its own potential for improved learning". In other words, the research theory generation employs itself as only a stage of the learning that is already taking place within the groups and individuals whose struggle and experience is generating the theory grounded in their doings. It is my argument that this posits the research as a 'grand scale' action research project, for example:

the core values of action research have been defined as respect for people and for the knowledge and experience they bring to the research process, a belief in the ability of democratic processes to achieve positive social change, and a commitment to action

(Brydon-Miller, 2009: 244)

Or this from Kindon *et al.* (2010: 11),

Today, Action Research ... [is] the most common term used to describe research that involves: a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory world view....[and bringing] together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others in the pursuit of practical issues of concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and communities

(Reason & Bradbury 2006: 1)

Obviously this piece of research is not action research traditionally constituted, the main difference between this bricolage research and action, or participatory action research, is that the 'participants' are participating in a different way. They are still positioned as research subjects, but their doings, their experience, their voices ground the research in order for it to be of use to them at another time – unlike the immediacy contained within normative action research. For example, one of the Occupiers I talked to said that when the occupation of St. Paul's began, they "hit the ground running" and that they had "no time for reflection about what they were doing or to think about the actions and consequences". She said that they felt that "anything was possible, we could and would change the world, the feeling was so positive, we didn't think of the need to record anything about our practice, we just ran to keep up with things as they were happening" (conversations with Occupiers). In my envisioning of this broader cycle this is where the researcher comes in as part of the 'action research cycle', to record, to witness, to reflect. It is this grounding of the theory for a 'grand' action research cycle which also necessitated the questions being emergent from that process. I did not have a 'freshly pressed' set of clean questions when I began, despite what Yin (2009: 10) has to say on the matter, regarding case study research:

defining the research questions in advance is probably the most important step to be taken in a research study

another case of the transgressive and subversive behaviour of bricolage. In my view and method, the questions had to emerge from the research process in order for them to be less about my research and more about the usefulness of the whole endeavour; what questions, when an answer was

attempted, would lead to theories and possible suggestions for further development of the pedagogy being practiced. This is because, as Kincheloe & Tobin (2006: 8) insist, “social theory viewed in relation to pedagogical theory ... profoundly enhances the ability of educators as critical thinkers to evaluate the worth of particular educational purposes, public knowledge policies, articulations of the curriculum, and evaluation practices”, and, I would argue, this includes learning for change and resistance. Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 26) have this to add:

knowledge in this process orientated context has a past and a future; researchers have traditionally viewed a phenomenon in a particular stage of its development. Bricoleurs operating on a terrain of complexity understand that they must transcend this tendency and struggle to comprehend the process of which an object of study is part.

I understand this as important as it speaks to the politics of the movements – the revolutionary moment (protest) versus the revolutionary process (prefiguration) – and reflects the processness of the commonist (Shantz, 2013) anarchism (Graeber, 2011) seemingly practiced by most of the social actors examined here. Therefore, there are no claims of single truth in this work, no great proclamations of final answers, only a recognition that it attempts to be part of a reflective and evolving process from one point of view (Coffey, 1999; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006) and an attempt to engage with ongoing conversations about revolutionary pedagogy and its necessity for social change (Cowden & Singh, 2013; Darder, 2002; Peters & Freeman-Moir, 2006; The Edu-Factory Collective, 2009; Trifonas, 2000) . There is humility in bricolage that allows the researcher to appreciate this via an understanding of the ‘power-saturated’ nature of any knowledge: “This is a political and ethical position... It

understands that knowledge is power” (Denzin, 2010: 26). However, as Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 71) argue, this is also an essential ingredient in the post disciplinary ethos of bricolage itself:

in confronting the regressive dynamics of mainstream disciplinarity bricoleurs push those within the disciplines to consider modes of understanding that fall outside the traditional conventions. Drawing upon critical theory, bricoleurs work towards an evolving criticality that melds several social-theoretical traditions in the effort to understand the way power operates to perpetuate itself

I would argue that this understanding must pertain not only to the topic of the research, but also be attentive to the way in which research is written and what the research wishes to achieve in the longer term. A warning then concerning writing this way:

the objective knowledge and the validated research processes used by reductionists are always sociologically negotiated in a power saturated context. Assertions that knowledge is permanent and universal are undermined [by bricolage] and the stability of meaning is subverted. Forces of domination will often reject such historically conscious and power-literate insights, as such awarenesses undermine the unchallenged knowledge assertions of power wielders. Critical hermeneutics, bricoleurs come to understand, can be quite dangerous when deployed in the sacred temples of knowledge production

(Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 12)

And as Schostak and Schostak (2013: 20) add “what is at stake in writing is the overlooked perspective, absent from the articulations of histories when written by the powerful. It is there that the revolution resides, not as a finalised or finalisable vision but as the voice to be heard”. This speaks to bricolage’s dialectical approach to research narratives as it “lends the word ‘tentative’ to the bricolage – the knowledge produced by bricoleurs is tentative rather than final” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 94). Kincheloe and

Berry add that “since in the zone of complexity no fact is self-evident and no representation is ‘pure’, any knowledge worker who believes research narratives are simple truths is operating in a naïve domain. Thus, bricoleurs assert that there are fictive elements to all representations and narratives” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 28). I concur and argue that there need to be fictive elements, acts of imagination and furtive thought experiments; this is what gives new theories, new knowledge, new understanding, and allows the process to continue. It allows the practice of radical research that “implies a radical politics because it raises questions that make the powerful feel uncomfortable, even threatened” (Schostak & Schostak 2008: 1).

4.2 Ethics

I had initially thought that this section would be very different from the one here. However, another interruptional event took place in the course of the research that rendered a fuller and empirically informed section on ethics to be included. The data discussed here was developed at the initial Occupy Research Collective (ORC) Convergence which I attended in London in 2013. Most people at the convergence were researchers and the material concerning the ethics of researching social movements, which I will discuss here, was further developed on an open Google Internet group for any interested party to contribute, comment or just read.

My initial thoughts about the ethics of my own research were based upon the idea that the legalistic relationship that researchers enter into when they ask the subjects of research to sign informed consent forms was inappropriate in this context. It seemed that this would produce an unequal relationship

(Brydon-Miller, 2009) from the start, where my 'expertise' and standing as a researcher may be interpreted as putting me in a superior position to the research subjects. In addition, I felt that it took away any power that they had as subjective storytellers or individuals with experience worth sharing into mere informants. This feeling was amplified when the people I spoke to welcomed me into what was essentially their community and were pleased to tell me their stories and explore their experiences with a third party, despite the repression they often suffered and the hostility they were experiencing from the media. My thinking about how the ethics of the research worked was further developed by the number of people I spoke to asking if they too could record our interaction, more on this later. I explored ideas on ethics and whilst according to Kincheloe and Berry (2004) bricolage is at its heart an ethical pursuit, as it gives voice to subjugated knowledges and places the subjective life worlds of its subjects at its core, something more solid was needed for the operational ethics of the work. Creating a legalistic framework from standard guidelines felt wrong to me as enclosing those stories that were enjoyed and experienced in common into private property felt like the practice of a form of academic capitalism (Holloway, 2010; Neary, 2012), and it was capitalism that was being fought against and therefore any notion of capitalist ideals had to be avoided. I turned to the work of Brydon-Miller (2009) for a discussion on covenantal ethics, which, although often associated with action research, seemed to offer a more appropriate set of guidelines for this research:

rather than approach the determination of ethics using current contractual discourse that regards research as commodity and ethics as a legalistic exchange, we adopt a covenantal ethics founded on the establishment of caring relationships among community research partners and a shared commitment to social justice

This notion of caring relationships and shared commitments seemed to speak to the ethos of bricolage in that these notions were common to all of the aspects in the work; a bricolage methodology, a focus from critical pedagogy and of course the focus of the research topic itself: education against the enclosure of capitalism. Hilsen (2006: 27) describes a model of covenantal ethics thus; “the unconditional responsibility and the ethical demand to act in the best interest of our fellow human beings”. This statement certainly seems to ring true with bricolage and I feel should surely be at the top of the list for all ethical guidelines, especially in research committed to social justice. However, there is, as always, a note of caution with vague notions such as ‘the best interest’ of others, as we understand from history that what is considered in someone’s ‘best interest’ changes both with the times and of course from person to person, group to group. Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 68) pose a series of questions to be asked at the beginning of any interview study, I have reproduced the ones that seem pertinent:

- what are the beneficial consequences of the study?
- How can the study contribute to enhancing the situation of the participating subjects? Of the human condition?
- How can the informed consent of the participating subjects be obtained?
- How will the researcher’s role affect the study?
- How can the researcher avoid co-option from the funding of the project or over identification with his or her subjects, thereby losing critical perspective on the knowledge produced?

Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 69) do stress however, that “rather than seeing these as questions that can be settled once and for all in advance of a

research project, we conceptualise them as fields of uncertainty (i.e., problem areas that should continually be addressed and reflected upon throughout an interview inquiry)". These were indeed, reflected upon throughout my inquiry, therefore, it is my hope that some, if not all of them will be addressed in what follows.

The Occupy Research Collective (ORC), a working group set up to examine the research being done on Occupy and other social movements and especially it seemed to explore the ethics of researching social movements, Occupy in particular, had responded to the issue of the amount of requests for interviews Occupiers were receiving and concern over how the material that emerged from them was being used with a convergence. Seemingly, it was felt that some ethical guidelines, produced by the Occupiers themselves (with some input from other researchers), would be a good way to address any concerns about these issues. Most of the people who attended the convergence were researchers of one type or another, all were sympathetic to Occupy's causes and some were actively involved in Occupy's activities. However, there were some attendees that were not actively engaged in research but only within Occupy. The conversation started with a discussion about insider/outsider perspectives and it became clear that those who were not researchers, but active in Occupy, were quite adamant that people who were not active in Occupy should not be able, or indeed allowed, to research it. This was unexpected as my previous experience with Occupiers was that they wanted to tell their stories and have as much information in the public realm as possible. This issue was not resolved despite discussions on the power of research, critical distance, academic discourse and other pertinent issues. However, the reason for this objection may have been present in

what followed. A list of guidelines for researching Occupy and other social movements was drawn up (Occupy Research Collective, 2012).

These were the guidelines:

1. Anyone researching a social movement or activist group should, whenever possible, make those groups aware of the fact.
2. The researcher(s) should send examples of previous work and/or describe their political interests and motivations for researching.
3. If there are any concerns, the researcher(s) should make an effort to meet with the activist group to discuss further before continuing.
4. The researcher(s) should ask the activist group what research they consider useful and if possible collaborate on such endeavours.
5. More generally, the research(s) should, where at all possible, commit to some form of collaboration with the activist group, whether it be helping out at a protest camp (e.g. in the kitchen), a social centre, or on a demonstration, or through online work or more administrative tasks.
6. All research material should be made freely available for anyone to view.
7. Reasonable effort should be made to discuss research findings with activists groups before publication, in particular to try and avoid misrepresentations that could be politically damaging to the group.
8. Any ethical requirements imposed through external institutions should be made clear to activist groups in correspondence with them.

(guidelines available at <http://piratepad.net/XqLMuhCau8>)

Of course, some of these guidelines differ little from standard ethical guidelines, such as number 1. and number 8. which are essentially pertaining to informed consent. However, many of the other guidelines could be read as censorship and coercion. Using ideas such as sending 'examples of previous work and/or describe their political interests and motivations for researching' might be viewed as the movement censoring who gets to write about them and how, ensuring they are always seen in a positive light. 'The

researcher(s) should, where at all possible, commit to some form of collaboration with the activist group, whether it be helping out at a protest camp (e.g. in the kitchen), a social centre, or on a demonstration, or through online work or more administrative tasks', indicates a 'payment' for the 'privilege' of carrying out the research. This could be seen in two ways; firstly, as the 'collaboration' suggested is generally not using the researchers expertise (with the possible exception of the social centre work), it devalues and ignores the knowledge that the researcher may already have that could be valuable to the camp; secondly, and most importantly for this work, it assumes that the research is of no value to the individuals or the movements in and of itself. Another clause that is very open to misunderstanding is number 7. 'Reasonable effort should be made to discuss research findings with activists groups before publication, in particular to try and avoid misrepresentations that could be politically damaging to the group'. I concur that it is very rarely a bad idea to ensure that no misunderstandings have occurred, but to ensure that the research is not politically damaging could be (mis)understood as only allowing research that is not politically in opposition or critical of the movement to be published.

Of course, as Schostak and Schostak (2013: vii) say, "no research is ever undertaken without a motive". It could be argued that some researchers may come with the express intention of politically damaging the movement, but surely, that is a risk one has to take when one places oneself in the public eye? There are unethical researchers, there are politically motivated journalists and there is always public scrutiny. However, to allow only research that you agree with, and have potentially censored, to be produced seems to me to be a direct paradox with the rest of the Occupy rhetoric

(Occupy London LSX, 2001). It does seem, therefore, that the production of ethical guidelines - whoever produces them - leads to a stagnant, distanced, open to interpretation and mistrustful relationship between researchers and the researched. There is also the “all too common belief” as Brydon-Miller (2009: 246) warns, “that simple adherence to the specifications of [ethics] documents ensures that the research will be ethical”. She argues that “rather than consider the broader ethical and moral implications of research, such systems narrow our focus to a minute examination of the precise language of consent forms” or, perhaps, in this case become less ethical because manipulation may be required to gain access. It is recognised that “an experienced interviewers knowledge of how to create rapport and get through the participants defences may serve as a ‘Trojan Horse’ to get inside areas of a person’s life where they were not invited” (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009: 75), therefore even vetting the researcher prior to access does not guarantee that the research subjects will achieve the kind of censorship that the ethical guidelines produced by Occupy suggest.

I would argue that the majority of the researchers I have met and read that have studied Occupy have done so with the apparent intention of understanding the movement from their disciplinary perspective (for example Chomsky, 2012; Hall, 2012; Halvorsen, 2012; Kroll 2011; Neary & Amsler, 2012, among others). In some of the accounts I have heard and read, I cannot recognise my own experience in the field, some have produced work that creates the sights, sounds and smells in my mind as I recognise theirs. Nevertheless, what all these accounts have done is provide food for thought, with more material for discussion and reflection. All of these endeavours have been part of Occupy in one way or another and have encouraged me to

wonder as Arditi (2008: 119) does, “what is it that entices people to involve themselves in this revolutionizing, and, what does it mean to ‘get involved’ here?”.

Surely, for the researcher this is a question of ethics and of the use-value of her research. Coffey (1999: 57) reminds us that

It is impossible to differentiate the subjective, embodied self from the socio-political and the researcher-professional. Our own sense of personhood – which will include age, race, gender, class, history, sexuality – engages with the personalities, histories and subjectivities of others present in the field. Our own subjective personality is part of the research and is negotiated in the field

I argue here that this is part of Arditi’s getting involved. The research can become very much a part of who you are and, I would argue, even more so if you accept a bricolage ethos, the notions of solidarity, of voicing on behalf of the voiceless, or even the critical secretary role espoused by Denzin (2010).

As one becomes inseparable from the research in order to engage with those others in the field, and, it is argued, the relationship between individuals and their contexts is the key to understanding, then the most ethical way to proceed is a dynamic engagement with ethical and moral principles, honesty and negotiation seem to become the key watchwords.

This is also the conclusion that Brydon-Miller (2009) comes to in her exploration of covenantal ethics and as Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 74) suggest, “being familiar with ethical issues, ethical guidelines and ethical theories may help the researcher to make choices that weigh ethical versus scientific concerns in a study. In the end, however, the integrity of the researcher – his or her knowledge, experience, honesty, and fairness – is the decisive factor”.

4.3 Mutually Useful Conversations

It could be argued that this knowledge, experience, honesty and fairness is especially pertinent when considering that researchers come from specific knowledge backgrounds. Kincheloe and Tobin (2006: 7) hold that “researchers use language developed by others, live in specific contexts with particular ways of being and ways of thinking about thinking, have access to some knowledges and not others, and live and operate in a circumstance shaped by particular dominant ideological perspectives”. This requires recognition of how much there is to give at every stage of the research process as well as how much there is to gain. In other words, the information, knowledge, experience and ways of thinking already possessed going into the research field have a relationship to other ways of thinking, other knowledges and other experiences taking place there. Thoughts have an intertextuality with other thoughts:

Adding to the complexity ... is the notion of intertextuality defined simply as the complicated interrelationship connecting a text to other texts in the act of textual creation or interpretation. Central to the importance of intertextuality in the context of bricolage and the effort to understand complexity is the notion that all narratives obtain meaning not merely by their relationship to material reality but from their connection to other narratives

(Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 27)

I argue that this intertextuality not only applies to the written word but also to conversation, to interviews and to convergences of people. I concur with Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 2) when they say that “the research interview is based on the conversations of daily life and is a professional conversation; it is an inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between

the interviewer and the interviewee". Therefore it can be seen as the *interaction* creating the knowledge in those situations, especially where the researcher is aiming to contribute to the struggle. Coffey (1999: 23) adds, "fieldwork involves the enactment of social roles and relationships, which places the self at the heart of the enterprise. A field, a people and a self are crafted through personal engagements and interactions among and between researcher and researched". I would argue that the important point here is that *interaction* rather than patient listening produces research knowledge. I come back now to the point made in the last section that many of the people I spoke with during my research asked whether they could record the interviews, a request which was never declined. I want to explore now the notion of the interview as a 'mutually useful conversation'.

As researchers, we belong to a moral community. Doing interviews is a privilege granted us, not a right that we have. Interviews are part of the dialogic conversation that connects all of us to the larger moral community. Interviews arise out of performance events. They transform information into shared experience. They do more than move audiences to tears. They criticize the world the way it is and offer suggestions of how it could be different

(Denzin 2009: 216)

It was interesting that she got out her iPhone laid it on the table and said 'you don't mind if I record this too do you?' It got me thinking about the nature of the interview in this context. Why should I be the only one getting something out of this? We continued to talk and I heard the hesitation, the correction of statements, the careful choosing of the right words to convey the sentiment that she tried to get across. The ever present iPhone on the table next to my digital voice recorder changed the interview. This conversation was not about me as researcher getting what I wanted in order to more fully understand her situation, it was about us both talking and listening and then being able to listen reflectively again in order for us both to understand the gravity of what had been said, to understand the nuances of the situation, to hear the changes that voicing an opinion has on that opinion and to change the way we saw the world.....

(Fieldwork journal, 2012)

Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 33) assert that “we should not regard the research interview as completely open and free dialogue between egalitarian partners”, overall I would tend to agree. There can be many power plays throughout the course of interviews but predominantly the interviewer holds the majority of the power in the specific research situation as they initiated the interaction. Kvale and Brinkman do concede however that there may be some exceptions, wherein “some interviewers attempt to reduce the power asymmetry of the interview situation by collaborative interviewing where the researcher and subject approach equality in questioning, interpreting and reporting” (p. 34). However, they also go on to assert that “an interview is literally an inter view, an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest” (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009: 2). It is this final assertion that is possibly of most interest to the notion of the mutually useful conversation. I was interested in what people participating in alternatively organised education had to say, not only about the education but also about the context of that education, the socio-political context, the aspirations for that education and the hopes and desires that that education had induced. I found that people were not only interested in talking about the things that I was interested in, but they were also interested in reflecting upon what had been said within the interview and learning from that too. I also felt that in order to lessen the inequality between us and hopefully get the interviewee to open up and not to censor what they said, I should converse rather than interview: we both had information, knowledge and experience that was useful to the other in our respective journeys. Wolcott (2005: 57) suggests that “there are always questions about the nature of the

relationship between fieldworker and informant: why was one willing to talk to the other, how much confidence can be placed in what was revealed, and how each has benefitted from the exchange". These are again, important questions, however, I think in this context an attempt at an answer can be made. It was reported during my conversations that the people I spoke to were willing to talk to me because they felt that they were doing something important and wanted to explore that further through our conversations. In addition, I think that a great deal of confidence can be placed in what was revealed because of the answer to the third question; each of us benefitted from the exchange. Much effort was made to relieve the inequality that this situation often entails; the interview was set up as a form of storytelling with interaction. My interaction was as honest and candid as possible and I was able to inform them and their thinking with interjections of how theory supported their experience, how they had reinvented forms of education that were theoretically sound as interventions and interruptions into the status quo. To reiterate Shukaitis and Graeber (2007: 37), "these moments embody not just practices but are in themselves ways of understanding the world and forms of research in action". Kincheloe and Tobin (2006: 6) put it this way, "to be in the world is to be in relationship. People are not abstract individuals who live as fragments, in isolation from one another", the hope here is that "in these moments borders that separate people burst open into renewed periods of social creativity and insurgencies" (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007: 37). I was attempting to create the possibility that we are no longer researcher and respondent, but human beings collaboratively finding a way to assist each other in making the world a better place through creative conversation and reflection. This view of the interview, I would argue, allows

an embrace of complexity in that it “constructs a far more active role for humans in shaping reality and creating the research processes and narratives that represent it. Such an active agency rejects deterministic views of social reality that assume the effects of particular social, political, economic, and educational processes” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 2-3). There is, however, a need to maintain a sense of strangeness during fieldwork (Coffey 1999), this was achieved by merely using the politics of the movement as contextualisation and the pedagogical aspects as the central focus. I argue that this allowed me to work in solidarity politically, whilst maintaining a critical distance through a strangeness for the research subjects: enquiry about the pedagogy, thus knocking off balance the emerging ‘normal responses’, that the Occupiers were used to giving to political theorists and social movement scholars. A second response however, is that, as The Invisible Committee (2009: 14) suggest, “the past has given us far too many bad answers for us not to see the mistakes were in the questions themselves”, maybe the questions were wrong before, maybe more connection, more subjective understanding, more human solidarity is what is needed to understand research knowledge as a tool of radical change? Thirdly, Kincheloe and Berry’s (2004: 74) bricolage focussed response may well be that “bricolage is dealing with ... a double ontology of complexity: first, the complexity of objects of inquiry and their being in the world; second, the nature of the social construction of human subjectivity, the production of human ‘being’”. In other words, we are both, the interviewer and the interviewee, being produced in some way by the interaction, our subjectivities being (de/re)constructed in the moment of interaction, in however small or significant a way.

The mutually useful conversations also create a feeling of inclusion in the research, because a dialogue has been initiated between the research and the research topic which may go beyond interviewing to engage participants in critical give and take (Howe & MacGillivray, 2009). This critical give and take is what has the potential to create the mutual usefulness of the conversation. Moreover, as Stake (2000: 19) upholds “we expect an inquiry to be carried out so that certain audiences will benefit – not just to swell the archives, but to help persons toward further understandings”. This idea further justifies the dialectic nature of the mutually useful conversation as it invites not only descriptive accuracy and critical give and take but helps persons to better understand their own actions as well as understanding the critical power of research, creating a more useful witness to the life worlds of the research subjects. Again, I would argue that this recognition of the “complex ontological importance of relationships alters the basic foundations of the research act and knowledge production process” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 73-4) to a grand action research cycle through better understanding of the role of the other in the critical reflection of one’s own position. Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 27) also assert that “in this context an autopoietic process is constructed as new modes of knowledge emerge in the interaction of these multidimensional perspectives”. This allows “the adept bricoleur to set up the bricolage in a manner that produces powerful feedback loops – constructs that in turn synergise the research process”. This notion not only reflects the interaction during the mutually useful conversation, but also the whole research project has this internally built in through the grounding of the theory and the questions in the data. Thinking of the overall process in this way has the potential to make the research report an analysis and *extension*

of what happened. This would then be 'fed back' to the movements that the research was attentive to. This sits on an ontology explained here by Whitehead and McNiff (2006: 23); "if you see yourself as part of other people's lives, and they of yours, you may adopt an insider approach, which would involve you offering descriptions and explanations for how you and they were involved in mutual relationships of influence". This explanation potentially makes obsolete the insider/outsider tensions expressed by the Occupiers at the ORC earlier and involves taking a fresh look at the necessary role of the researcher as part of the activist circle in the context of radical research for social change.

4.5 Data analysis

In order to properly understand the chapters that follow, some words about how the data was analysed are needed, outlining the process through which sense and meaning were made of the mutually useful conversations and other data sources for the specific task of allowing a conversation to emerge between the theoretical understanding of what was possible and what was claimed and observed. Howe and MacGillivray (2009: 569) explain this process as "testing the claims and counter-claims of social researchers [and indeed theorist] by entering them into *critical dialogue* with those whose perspectives are informed by relevant lived experience" (my Italics). I argue that it is also important to realise that "the strategy involves an un-writing of the normal pattern of writing up research" (Schostak & Schostak, 2013: ix), but achieves a meaningful exploration of the relationship between theory and data making them work for, rather than in tension with, each other.

The research data was examined initially to produce the descriptions of the sites heard in the last Chapter, and to get a sense of what was being said in order to mine theory to find ways of thinking about the education and pedagogy that took place that interrelated with the data. The data was selected due to its relevance to the story of pedagogy and experience running through the sites of interest, this conceptualisation of the data was chosen in line with the notion of intertextuality: “one text relates to another in a multiplicity of ways – it is intertextual” (Schostak & Schostak, 2013: xi).

Thematic analysis, wherein material is read to search for specific ‘themes’ which emerge from repetition of occurrence from different sources, was used to ensure that the data was analysed on what seemed to be important to the researched individuals and context. This was coupled with a theoretical reading of the interviews and Internet sources, as the research subjects were asked to talk broadly about their learning within Occupy and the SSC (I was not able to interview students at The University of Lincoln). Documents not necessarily related to pedagogy or education specifically were analysed for their educational and pedagogic content in the case of Occupy, such as General Assembly (GA) minutes and livestream videos of events that occurred. Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 233) say, “this eclectic (bricolage) form of generating meaning– through a multiplicity of ad hoc methods and conceptual approaches – is a common mode of interview analysis, contrasting with more systematic analytic modes and techniques such as categorisation and conversation analysis”. Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 95) insist about this process that “understanding that knowledge is not mimetic, that it is far more complex than a reflection of a true reality, bricoleurs proclaim that interpretation is a productive, not a reproductive,

activity". The interpretation of the data was specifically an attempt to find something new about educational organisation, following on from the commitment to ground the theory in the data. This was because the point of the research was not only to understand what was happening in Occupy, but also to understand how the theories of radical education would stand up to a form of organic popular education erupting on the streets and what each could offer the other. The conversations I had with the Occupiers all entailed them talking about their learning as well as their general, political and personal experience, sometimes what they saw as not being specifically about 'education' due to their understanding from prior experience, I saw as directly relating to the theories of radical, popular education and critical pedagogy. For example, one Occupier with no theoretical knowledge of education described her experience in a way that could have been written by Freire himself. She said such things as "I understand a lot more after talking to others that I can change how I live my life" (understanding the conditions of one's own reality and the power one has to change it: Freire, 1993a); "I don't just read the headlines now, I go away and read the whole story from different sources because I think I should find out the facts" (overcoming sloganisation through the development of epistemological curiosity: Freire, 1993b). There were many examples of these kinds of direct connections that happened in conversations where Occupiers said phrases such as "I'm not sure I have really learnt anything, but I have changed a lot..." Kincheloe and Berry continue on to say that, a particular interpretation is chosen because it does one of several things. One of those things, that is of particular interest to this work, is that it "grants access to new possibilities of meaning", it raises "new questions and suggests new types of research into

the phenomenon” (2004: 101). A particular interpretation also helps “in the construction of future insights”. I would argue that there is not much use to the research if it does not help in the construction of future insights, as the commitment to research work that can be enacted attests. Other questions Kincheloe and Berry insist must be asked of the interpretation of research data are issues such as

Does it identify where individuals are situated within the socio-political web of reality? Does it uncover the ways ideology operates to undermine individuals’ desire for both self-direction and interconnectedness? Is there coherence between the analysis and the phenomenon being researched? Does it raise questions of self-understanding, for example, the nature of the relationship of the producer of the text to the phenomenon in question? Does it indicate an awareness of the discourses, values and ideologies that have shaped it? Does it engage its subjects to better conceptualise the world so they can transform it?

(Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 101-2)

If one asks these types of questions whilst executing a theoretical reading, or what Schostak and Schostak (2013) call a ‘symptomatic reading’, a reading that might reveal the hidden, latent or repressed theorisations of the data, one should find that “what is being heard in such readings are previously silenced discourses, or discourses that could only be heard elsewhere that bring to the fore in a newly opened space, a new agenda” (Schostak & Schostak, 2013: 15). So once again, no strict methodological rules have been followed as a theoretical/symptomatic understanding of the issues had been developed from the initial reading.

Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 236) suggest, “a researcher may read through his or her interviews again and again, reflect theoretically on specific themes of interest, write out interpretations, and not follow any systematic method or

combination of techniques.....this may perhaps suggest that recourse to specific analytical tools becomes less important with a theoretical knowledge of the subject matter of an investigation". Christians (2000: 145) suggests that the watchword for this type of analysis is "interpretive sufficiency" and goes on to describe this as an account that "possess that amount of depth, detail, emotionality, nuance, and coherence that will permit a critical consciousness, or what Paulo Freire (2000) terms conscientization to be formed" (p.148). Christians comes to this conclusion because of a belief that "through conscientization the oppressed gain their own voice, and collaborate in transforming their culture" (p. 148). Therefore, the thematic and theoretical/symptomatic analysis of the data once again has a symmetry with the topic of the research by again "listening to the ...voices telling about their [experience]" (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009: 237). The pedagogy discussed in the literary theory concludes that this should happen in the specific learning environment, the work then "compares their descriptions with claims about their work from literature" (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009: 237). Therefore, the researcher, in the practice of analysis becomes 'hitchhiker' (Schostak & Schostak, 2008) or 'traveller' (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009) in the life world of the other. And as Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 48-9) describe, "the potentialities of meanings in the original stories are differentiated and unfolded through the traveller's interpretations of the narratives he or she brings back home to audiences. The journey may not only lead to new knowledge: the traveller might change as well".

Having visited the camp at St. Paul's I feel as if things, I, can never be the same. Something changed there, something changed me. I couldn't pin point what it was, I really don't know what it was, but I cannot think the same way, I cannot understand the world as I did before, there is something fundamentally challenging about this form

of collective action, about this form of commons creation, about this form of prefiguration. It changes the way you see things – if you let it.

(Fieldwork Journal, 2012)

In the next chapter, I will dialogue with educational theorists in an attempt to understand the conditions necessary to enhance the potential of education to create social transformation. Examining the different models suggested by the initial examination of the spaces under study and how they might, hypothetically, interact and produce new ideas and constellations of resistance. Alternatively, how they might (re)create enclosures, or (re)produce sites of academic vandalism (Neary in Class War University, 2013). This will be done by attempting to identify a range of possible explanations as to how to organise education for a more just and equal pedagogy.

Chapter Five: Exploring the Countervailing Discourses.

This work argues that education, appropriately organised, is an essential tool for the types of social change advocated by performing a prefigurative politics. Holloway (2010: 206), talking of the way in which capitalism encloses us, says “the flow of determination that comes from the capitalist totality of social relations is constituted by the way in which our doings relate to one another”. I tend to agree, the issue at stake in this examination of countervailing discourses is one of relations. Therefore, authors who constitute these countervailing discourses and advocate unveiling the oppressive conditions of neoliberalism through political critiques and pedagogies will be explored. Authors on critical pedagogy such as Freire, Shor, Giroux, Apple and others who bring to the work notions of pedagogy that is both popular and politicised. Holloway’s arguments will be drawn upon to assist in the understanding of the prefigurative nature of the Occupy movement and the fissures in the normative social relations potentially produced by the other supplementary sites. Other authors are present: Rancière will be referred to in order to provide an understanding of the ‘Anyone can teach, Everyone can learn’ cry of TCU within the notion of these possible cracks in capitalism (Holloway, 2010). Two specific models of education will be focussed upon in an attempt to really understand what has occurred in the researched sites and what may be sustainable into the uncertain future as a model for a revolutionary, transformative pedagogy.

According to many, society is currently manipulated by capitalist mechanisms, or the social synthesis produced by capitalism (see for example Cleaver, 2000; Holloway, 2010; Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2012; Harvey, 2011; Shantz, 2013; Žižek, 2009, 2012). In other words, many political theorists argue that the relations we have with one another are mediated through the exchange of goods, commodities. This is the starting point, the notion of a capitalist totality that we cannot control, but it is argued in this work and by the people involved in the spaces this work utilises, that even if we cannot control this totality, we can change it and create new truths of social life. Therefore, although I start this discussion from the point of view that the ideologies and systems of capitalism and of neoliberalism are totalising, with no 'outside' of their controls, there are ways to think otherwise, ways to enact other relations that escape this form of enclosure, but are also an attempt to prevent the creation of another totality, that attempts to allow for individual equality and forms of individual freedom. The discourses that shall be heard throughout this work, from the theorists, from the Occupiers and from the purveyors of the other spaces, are an attempt to counter totalisation, as well as an attempt to support a communing, a way of being that holds our collective endeavours in common. Therefore the countervailing discourses attempt to propose/construct an alternative reality because, it is argued, capitalism encloses, neoliberalism more so, as it gives rise to the need for more regulation of its false promise of unfettered free markets than needed by capitalism alone (Harvey, 2011). Individual liberty promised by neoliberalism referred to the wealthy and their corporations alone and the individual person was enclosed into a system of, not 'trickle

down' economics as capitalism had promised (Fisher, 2009; Harvey, 2011) but a form of economics that might be termed 'flood up' wealth accumulation.

This thesis stands on the notion that education is key to bringing about social change, it is therefore essential, I argue, to draw out and explore the implications for education of the countervailing discourses contained here and in the sites explored. Therefore this work can be seen as an attempt to understand how to build models of practice that have the potential to bring about fundamental change, to create critically engaged learners who might continue to sustain the project of the constant and ongoing democratisation of public life. An attempt not to enclose the enclosers, but to open up social life into a new common, that has revolutionary potential, through the production of new multitudes (Hardt & Negri, 2004). Therefore, I will briefly concentrate on the primary task of understanding the connection between social change and education in general. Then, I will look at the reasons and justification for analysing critical pedagogy, in particular, as a tool of social transformation before going on to examine that tool in detail. I will then subject it to a contextual reading through the data, which will dialogue with the theories and build new knowledge through the living examples of education put to work in order to attempt to overcome and delegitimise the current social order.

5.1 Why study education for social change?

how do we light up our eyes with amazement, how do we touch that half-awareness, that tension, that ec-static distance, how do we bring it clearly into focus, how do we magnify it, how do we open it up, how do we strengthen and expand and multiply all those rebellions in

which one pole of the ec-static relation (doing)¹⁰ repudiates with all its force the other pole (labour)? That is the question of revolution.

(Holloway, 2010: 255)

This question echoes the crux of the inquiry. Perhaps then, it could be argued that now, more than ever, it is true that “revolutionary theory is now the enemy of all revolutionary ideology *and knows it*” (Debord, 1977: para. 124), in addition, what of Gorz (1997: 46) and his insistence that “the bourgeoisie succeeded in destroying at root what consciousness the proletariat might have had of its sovereign creativeness”. How then do we tackle the idea that “if we allow ourselves to fall for the trickery of neoliberal economic discourses, which affirm realities of homelessness and poverty as inevitable, then opportunities for change become invisible and our role in fostering change becomes absent” (Freire, 2007: 4)?

Ira Shor (Shor in Macrine, 2009: 121) illuminates a possible answer to inform the discussion when he says “the values embedded in any *learning process* can shape us into people who question the status quo or into people who accommodate to the way things are or into people who celebrate the system we live in” (my Italics). This sentiment is echoed by many other educational theorists (see Brookfield, 2001, 2005; Brookfield & Holst, 2011; Freire, 1985, 1998, 2004, 2005, 2008; Freire & Faundez, 1989; Heaney, 1993 for example). Therefore we may be able to conclude that ‘education’ is the answer, if we just, as a state, as a society, educate people better, then we can abandon revolutionary theory and watch the miraculous transformation of society into a just and equitable future. Maybe, but there is caution to be

¹⁰ Holloway, throughout his book *Crack Capitalism*, uses the term *doing* or *concrete doing* to signify what Marx refers to as *concrete labour*. He juxtaposes this with the term *labour* for that work which is imposed by capitalist relations, Marx referred to this as *abstract labour*.

taken, to romanticise any form of education in that way may be to run head first down a blind alley. Mostly, as explored in the Introduction to this work, in the current society I have described, one that is governed by capitalist social synthesis and mediated by the commodity exchange, education when appropriated by the state, can only mean *school*. Holloway (2010: 116) asks

how can we think of changing the world radically in a world in which people are personifications of their social functions? If we are entrapped by roles generated by capitalism, how can we think of breaking the pattern of social relations formed by these roles? This touches particularly the question of class and the revolutionary nature of the working class. If we think of the working class as people who fit into a certain classification (as wage earners, as producers of surplus value), then we treat them as being inherently limited, as personifications of the positions they occupy, as bearers of certain social relations, capitalist social relations. How can workers, as personifications of labour, constitute a revolutionary class, a class that would overthrow labour?

According to this point of view and the view of several others (Gorz, 1997; Hardt & Negri, 2004, 2009, 2012; Merrifield, 2011; Holloway, 2010), the answer seems to be to rethink class, and raise the political consciousness of all (Freire, 1985, 1998, 2004, 2005, 2008) and to create what Holloway calls 'cracks' in capitalism:

a crack is the perfectly ordinary creation of a space or moment in which we assert a different type of doing. We start from two antagonistic ways of doing: that which we reject and that which we try to create. The cracks are revolts of one type of doing against another type of doing.

(Holloway, 2010: 84)

A focussed question then becomes how do we begin to assert these different types of doing through raising political consciousness and rethinking class? The beginnings of a potential answer may lie in Holloway's statement that we need to start from two antagonistic ways of doing: understanding what it is

that we currently create and what it is that we are trying to create instead. Without these understandings any effort to recreate social relations in other ways might be difficult, if not impossible. However, I would argue that this is a notion needs to be understood in real terms, in terms of what actually happens when people assert their right to the freedom of assembly and begin to attempt to help each other understand these issues. This is where, in this conversation at least (and I am sure in many others), critical pedagogy comes in. Critical pedagogy is a pedagogy of question (Freire & Faundez, 1989), a pedagogy of hope (Freire, 2004) and a pedagogy of desire (Freire, 2007). It is to this pedagogy that attention shall now be turned in the hope that critical pedagogy, enacted through public forms of popular education, mixed with the prefigurative politics that offers a crack in the fabric of capitalism may offer a way of exploring education, the 'public' and the building of countervailing forms of organisation.

5.2 How does critical pedagogy contribute to the development of countervailing discourses and organisational forms?

Freire himself invited those reviewing and using his work to reinvent and rethink his philosophy and thoughts for their own context. However, there are what might be called 'soft' readings of Freire; these constitute a "community based approach which stresses group work, mutual respect, discussion and experiential learning. This approach would be essentially non-directive and operate on pluralist assumptions" (Lockhart, 1997: 19). In this work, I am advocating what might be considered, by contrast, a 'hard' reading of Freire, a more radical reading that allows me to stress the more political functions as primary and emphasise the necessity of transformation and confrontation

and potentially creates the processes for what Mouffe (1999, 2013) calls the constant revolutionising of democracy. I argue in this work that this transformation and confrontation should refer not only to the social world around us (the status quo, capitalist relations and so on), but also the transformation and confrontation of the way in which people think of their 'place' in this social world, how they absorb it and to what extent they question or accommodate it, transform themselves within it and confront the extent to which they are alienated and oppressed within it. In other words, to what extent they escape their schooling. I argue that this way of reading Freire's work is essential for the purposes here as it contributes to the understanding of education as a process for revolutionary social change and social justice rather than as a tool for individual empowerment or localised community action on isolated issues, therefore contributing to wider countervailing discourses which all the sites under exploration here claim to be a part of.

It is generally recognised that Paulo Freire has been thought of as the 'founder' of critical pedagogy since the publication of his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993a). I turn predominately to his work because he articulates the process of education that, I argue, is recognisable in the pedagogical processes in Occupy, his work with the Brazilian peasants was to assist them to read the word and the world, to understand their place in the social milieu and to develop their power to change it (Freire, 1993a). This is an attempt to ensure that although this work operationalises Freire's writing in a very different context, his work allows the articulation of the pedagogical processes that were claiming to be for the same purposes in Occupy: to critically awaken and to realise the power of the individual to

change the world. Central to Freire's understanding is that the essence of human existence is transformation. According to many critical pedagogy scholars (Giroux, 1992, 2001, 2011; McLaren, 1998a; Macrine, 2009; Mayo, 2004; Shor, 1992, for example), Freire believed that individuals transform the world through their work and actions, and in doing so transform themselves and the world around them. This is the basis of Freirean critical pedagogy and will guide the work to understand how practicable critical pedagogy is as a tool for social change at the current socio-political juncture, as a countervailing discourse in its own right and as an attempt to create the conditions for new discourses against global capital to be heard and acted upon, especially in the light of Occupy and the other sites examined here.

Cho (2013: 70) tells us that the "fundamental core themes" of critical pedagogy include:

1. Education as a change agent (Freire, 1993a; Giroux & McLaren, 1989)
2. Teachers as public intellectuals (Giroux, 1988)
3. Curriculum based on experiences and voices of students (hooks, 1994; Shor, 1992)
4. Emphasis on dialogue and consensus (Ellsworth, 1992; Freire, 1993a; Lather, 1992)
5. Pedagogy as praxis (Freire, 1993b; Lather, 1998; McLaren & Jaramillo, 2007);
6. And multiplicity and diversity (Leonardo, 2002, 2005; Luke & Gore, 1992; McLaren, 1997)

This gives a good overview of the terrain of critical pedagogy and these fundamentals will be explored here.

Freire and critical pedagogy, of course, have their critics, (for example Biesta, 1998; Ellsworth, 1992, among others). However, McLaren (2000: 15) tells us "they should not detract from Freire's central importance as a foundational educational thinker, a philosopher who ranks among the most

important educators of our era". As Nocella *et al's* (2010) book *Academic Repression* attests, critical pedagogy's potential power has not gone unnoticed, certainly in North America, by supporters of a system that schools. This is partly because critical pedagogy is an attempt to find a "language of possibility" (Cho, 2013: 69) rather than relying solely on critique to elicit action therefore opening the possibility for the production of new dialogues. One of the main notions in Freire's thinking agrees that schools cause inequality and are sites of capitalist reproduction (ibid), whereas, as explored earlier, education emancipates and creates the conditions for the imaginings of alternatives to dominant ideology. Illich (2011: 2), however, takes this idea a stage further and suggests that "not only education but social reality itself has become schooled", suggesting not only that 'education' is becoming co-opted into the schooling machine, but also that the public pedagogy (Sandlin, *et al*, 2011) of everyday worlds is schooling people into compliance and conformity. I would suggest that this is an important point because it fits in with the ideas discussed earlier about the manufacture of the 'lonely crowds' (Debord, 1977; Riesman, 1969) and the destruction of the consciousness of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie (Gorz, 1997). This notion of the co-option of everyday life insists that individuals are schooled into these acts, these states of being, the question becomes, therefore; can individuals be educated out of their schooling, through this language, this countervailing discourse, of possibility contained within the philosophy of critical pedagogy, as an alternative to the inevitability and determinism of the neoliberal discourse? According to Shor (1996: 17), people - and in his work particularly students - "are constructing the subordinate self at the same time that they are resisting and undermining it,

while believing that their 'real selves', real lives, are somewhere else". Shor argues that "in such cultural conflict, there is no simple way critical-democratic pedagogy can transform the anti-intellectual stalemate of an unequal status-quo". Thus, it can be argued, finding a language of possibility becomes paramount to begin social change, as does the awakening of the social consciousness, creating an understanding of what social relations are pushing individuals to do. Freire refers to this 'schooling' as the 'banking method' (Freire, 1993a), wherein deposits of knowledge are placed into the mind of the learner, to be drawn upon when that, apparently objective and neutral, knowledge is required. Bahruth and Steiner, (2000: 120) add, "the basic assumption, that [people] are identical empty vessels, is not only erroneous, but punitive to [people] who have non-mainstream backgrounds", or are trying to think and do otherwise. However, Freire (1993a: 60) states that

unfortunately, those who espouse the cause of liberation are themselves surrounded and influenced by the climate which generates the banking concept, and often do not perceive its significance or its dehumanising power. Paradoxically, they utilise this same instrument of alienation in what they consider an effort to liberate.

In other words they continue, through their attempts at liberation, to reproduce the inequalities and social relations that alienate, by utilising the educational paradigm that is most familiar to them, the banking method of schooling but not just that, it could be seen as that they are not merely utilising, but that they are conditioned into this by their own experience of social relations and social life, a conditioning that may be very difficult to escape. It therefore seems that there potentially needs to be a robust outline of an educational paradigm that supports social change, whilst taking into

account the potential for damaging relations and emphasising mechanisms that inhibit these phenomena of reproduction that appear in attempts at liberation, as these damaging relations only strengthen the fatalism of the capitalist social synthesis. As Holloway (2010: 39) insists, “if our struggle is not asymmetrical to capitalism in its forms, then it simply reproduces capitalist social relations, whatever its content”. This asymmetrical form seems to be one of the essential factors that should be present in critical pedagogy, or it perhaps should be abandoned for something new.

Heaney (1993: 19-20) states that education facilitates “democratic reflection and action through critical identification of the issues”, rather than serving to “domesticate learners... and adjust minds to the inevitable conformities of a mass society”. I suggest that the key phrases here are ‘democratic reflection’, and ‘critical identification’. These phrases give hope to a search for a transformative pedagogical paradigm. Freire (1993a: 60) offers this:

those truly committed to liberation must reject the banking concept in its entirety, adopting instead a concept of women and men as conscious beings and consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit making and replace it with the posing of problems of human beings in their relations with the world.

This idea of consciousness is central to all the work in critical pedagogy and the raising of consciousness is a central task in creating the conditions for countervailing discourses to arise as Steinklammer (2012: 31) explains:

consciousness raising and reflection are tasks for critical education because education constitutes an anti-habitual attitude, in which the human being critically decides again and again on his/her consciousness and relation to the world rather than letting it become affirmative. Education is not a habitus, but a force that objects to every kind of habitualisation of habits that chains the human being to what already exists.

I would argue that education should indeed ‘constitute an anti-habitual attitude’ and certainly critical pedagogy seems to. Methods such as problem posing and questioning the status quo which Shor (1996: 61) insists is an “unpredictable adventure that interrupts routine behaviours, expectations, and relationships”; dialectics which create from a critical-democratic pedagogy, ‘contact zones’ (Pratt, 1991) or ‘zones of proximal development’ (Vygotsky, 1962) which become laboratories for the “counter-hegemonic reconstruction of the social self” (Shor, 1996: 23). I understand these acts from critical pedagogy as producing anti-habitual attitudes. This is arguably because one of the tasks of critical pedagogy is to engender critical thinking in people.

An important aspect of Freire’s work, described here by McLaren (2000: 8), is that whereas mainstream educators often “decapitate the social context from the self and then cauterize the dialectical movement between them, Freire stresses the dialectical motion between the subject and object, the self and the social, and social structure and human agency”, thus connecting the individual with the world and visa- versa. Making these connections is not only an essential aspect of critical pedagogy as Freire insisted, but many educators and theorists would insist that the connections are also essential for a politics of social transformation which hopes to put an end to the injustices and inequalities built into the capitalist system (Bonefeld *et al.*, 1992; Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2012; Harvey, 2003, 2011). What Freire claimed to be articulating, more than a ‘method’ of education was a true, well-founded “critical hope” that was a tool to counter the fatalism of neoliberalism (Freire, 1998: 70). Freire’s attitude to education was that it was

fundamentally a political act (Allman, 1987; Aronowitz, 1993; Freire, 1985, 1993a, 1998, 2004; Giroux, 2011; McLaren 2000a). According to Freire and other critical pedagogy scholars, its main task was to awaken the political consciousness of subjugated and oppressed peoples in order that they more clearly see the shroud of oppression that surrounded them and clouded their judgements as agentic human beings, unfinished and in process (Apple *et al.*, 2009; Freire, 1976, 1993a, 1996, 2004; Shor, 1992, 1996; Shor & Freire, 1987). Shor (1996: 37) asks what I would assert is a poignant question of whether a critical pedagogy can “come to grips with the political fictions disguising social realities?” Freire’s work has sometimes been domesticated by his followers: “selected aspects of his corpus are uncritically appropriated and decontextualized from his larger political project ... in order to make a more comfortable fit with various competing political agendas” (McLaren, 2000: 13). Freire seemed aware of this potential, and insisted that “it is in our seriousness as professional people *with a competence for political organisation* that our strength *as educators* resides” (Freire, 1998: 65, my *Italics*). This statement seems to acknowledge that educators are political actors and it is this aspect that educators should perhaps be acutely aware of in order to elicit real change. Shor (1996: 54) adds to this that “[students] too must become questioners and problem-posers, not only [the educator], because questioning is the epistemic stance of critical learners and citizens”. Therefore, a robust definition of critical pedagogy is akin to the one espoused by Apple *et al.* (2009: 3) which insists that critical pedagogy

involves a thorough-going reconstruction of what education is for, how it should be carried out, what we should teach and who should be empowered to engage in it. This more robust understanding.....involves the fundamental transformations of the underlying epistemological and ideological assumptions that are made

about what counts as 'official' or legitimate knowledge and who holds it. It is also grounded in radical shifts in one's social commitments. This involves a commitment to social transformation and a break with the comforting illusions that the ways in which our societies and their educational apparatuses are currently organised can lead to social justice.

Apple *et al.* seem to be asserting the necessity of what the three sites explored in this work claim to be doing. Creating the conditions, at least, for the emergence of countervailing discourses through the reorganisation of education away from schooling and therefore control and conformity.

A contemporary and situated reading is now appropriate in order to make an attempt to place critical pedagogy in the service of the new social movements who are engaging in forms of radical pedagogy, either intentionally or not, in order to transform our world through the potential reimagining and recreation of social relations and societal organisation. This is because with this meaning of educator and its multiple perspectives, there is a need to understand not only what this educator does, but who he or she may now be.

I would assert that in the case of Occupy, the educator became everyone and everything. The educator was the context, the encampment, every individual that stepped foot through that square. The educator became in that context a potential burgeoning awareness and an immanent community of learners. In the case of the other sites, which have some form of hierarchy, albeit a possibly shallow one in the case of the SSC, it is important to understand the questions asked by Apple *et al.* in context regarding who can teach, who can engage in education and for what purpose. Apple *et al.* (2009: 7) restate that "throughout every region of the world, there are powerful movements and examples of radical pedagogic efforts both within

the formal educational sector as well as in community literacy programmes, labour education, anti-racist and anti-colonialist mobilizations, women's movements and others". Therefore, it is felt that a deeper understanding is needed of the politics that make these new social movements apparently different, apparently more pedagogical. What politics are involved in the movements that have created the possible need for a re-reading and re-contextualising of critical pedagogy? Moreover, where might they take education to reorganise social lives? What might an alternative university as a laboratory for social organisation look like?

5.3 Developing the Crack Capitalism Thesis as a Response to the emergent potential of countervailing discourses and counterhegemonic ways of being within Occupy London.

The sight of Tent City was a rip, a fissure in the reality of London life. The city is arranged for the ease of commerce and power wrangling, it is unexpected to find this rag-tag community of people bustling about, organising meetings, having discussions, collaborating, thinking and imagining together. Tent City is a place where all the commodified relationships melt away; a place of mutual aid, of conviviality, of sharing and caring, of holding the property, the wishes, the dreams and the desires of those involved in common, it is a crack in the everyday reality of capitalism.

(Fieldwork journal, 2012)

In a cold world, we are the sun shining on the ice, creating the cracks that can move with terrifying and unpredictable speed. Or not.

(Holloway, 2010: 79)

According to the people I spoke to during the course of this research, there are a number of authors who have been instrumental in the thinking and practice of the new social movements and particularly Occupy (see for

example *The Invisible Committee*, 2009; Hessel, 2011; Holloway, 2005, 2010; Sharp, 2012 among others). However, Holloway's (2010) *Crack Capitalism* thesis was often directly credited by some as inspiration for the spaces under discussion in this work as it echoed the notions of taking control of one's own position within the totality and coming together through acts dissent to create new ways of doing, seeing and thinking. Holloway (2010: 171) has this to say, which frames the ideas behind the *Crack Capitalism* thesis, especially in light of the St. Paul's camp:

[The] *other side* [of ourselves that is not made by capitalism] is not a mere potential or possibility. The *other side* is potential, it is an anticipation of the world that might exist, but to treat it as mere possibility leaves us dangerously in the air, postpones yet again the realisation of this potential to some vague and undetermined future. A potential that is not a live antagonism, a living struggle is worth nothing....to understand abstraction as present process means that that which is abstracted exists not just as potential, but as a real force in the present.

Holloway's thesis is based on the idea, then, that people do *something* now to change the conditions of their lives that they "fight from the particular" (p. 83) that they move together in a "discordant harmony" (p. 78), that using "trust as a central organising principle" (p. 65) they "stop making capitalism and do something else" (p. 109). In effect, that people create 'cracks' in the very fabric of capitalism and capitalist social relations, one of the intriguing things about Occupy and the other sites was that they seemed to be attempting to 'crack' schooling with countervailing ideas about education. This is important as what this *something* is, remains up to the individual, as Holloway insists that there can be no homogenising, no totalising. For the purpose of this work, that *something* is seen as pedagogical, the sites explored here, particularly Occupy, are the contexts. The possibility of a

critical pedagogy practiced through popular education and the supplementary spaces are posited as potentially enduring *somethings*, following the temporary *something* of Occupy.

Merrifield (2011: 129) insists, “the factuality of the ‘real world’ was being afforded too much critical right. One simply lashed out in the prison-house of negativity”. Before the various dissident eruptions of 2010 – 2011, all Western societies seemed to be doing was concentrating on this ‘factuality’, the ‘what was’, the TINA syndrome (There Is No Alternative), through mantras of economic growth, perpetual war, measures of austerity and the essentialism of schooling as a means to create an acceptability of these ‘facts’. As has been said (unknown¹¹ quoted in Holloway, 2010) said, ‘it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism’. Holloway (2010: 50) insists that by creating a crucial shift in emphasis, “instead of focussing our attention on the destruction of capitalism, we concentrate on building something else”, he purposely does not say what that something else might be and instead allows for the possibility of a politics of the first person (Katsiaficas, 2006), the potential of a multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2004). He also adds, “the idea of a future revolution has become the enemy of emancipation. We can however create now ‘free enclaves’ or ‘temporary autonomous zones, moments of uprising’ (Bey, 1985, quoted in Holloway): an uprising is like a ‘peak experience’ as opposed to the standard of ‘ordinary’” (Holloway, 2010: 33). This notion of the peak experience speaks to my impression of Occupy and of the elation of the occupiers whilst the camp was still in situ. These autonomous zones, in spaces such as the SSC,

¹¹ This quote has been attributed to many people, for example Slavoj Žižek, Holloway quotes it from Turbulence (<http://turbulence.org.uk/turbulence-4/present-tense-future-conditional/>) whose article states the difficulty tracking down the original source for the quote.

moments of uprising and peak experiences, such as Occupy, are what potentially constitute the 'cracks' in Holloway's thesis. In Holloway's words then, "revolution is simply the assuming of our responsibility as the creators of social reality, the social assuming of our power-to-do" (p. 249), an idea that follows on from the Spinozan (2006) notions of the powers of individuals: thinking, imagining, desiring, running, making, and so on, the stuff of education itself. But can these 'powers' be 'educated' in order to crack the enclosure of schooling? Can they be 'educated' in a free and egalitarian manner so as to form an internal democracy of the individual, an internal set of agonisms that ensure our individual powers are reflecting the external democracy that is desired, an aggregation of individual and collective powers that resist enclosure and domination?

According to Holloway, experiences of cracks can come in many shapes and sizes, and should all have their own character, some might be collective and some might be individual, but Holloway insists that they are all important, without exception, if society is to change at a fundamental level. Therefore, as a revolutionary theory, "revolution, then, is the return of the repressed. Not just of the repressed sections of the population (proletarians, women, indigenous, blacks, and so on), but of that which is repressed within us" (p. 224): in other words, the desire to stop conforming to the 'factuality' of the present, our schooled selves; our repressed desires to not conform are therefore revolutionary desires. "It is the revolt of that which exists against and pushes beyond. It is the revolt of creative doing that exists against alien determination and pushes beyond, towards self-determination. But creative doing is not just creation of that which exists outside us, but self-creation, creation of our own sexuality, our own culture, our own thinking and feeling"

(Holloway, 2010: 224-5), a re-education project that begins from within. It is my argument here that an appropriately organised critical education could, indeed, have the potential to 'crack' schooling and release these revolutionary desires and go some way to this self- (re)creation.

The question now becomes that of if revolutionary theory now consists of our desire to not conform to what Holloway calls the 'social synthesis' created by capitalism, what positive desires do we have? What, according to Holloway might we desire to do? Holloway (2010: 45) considers that "the idea is gaining ground that the only way to change the world is to do it ourselves and do it here and now", an example, then, of the prefigurative political behaviour of Occupy? The sentiment is also echoed by Gorz (1997: 3) when he stated, some time ago, that "the outline of a society based on the free use of time are only beginning to appear in the interstices of, and in opposition to, the present social order". A society based on the free use of time, even a micro-society, such as Occupy may have been, or the spaces in the margins such as the SSC claims to inhabit, can be counted as potential cracks in Holloway's terms. This can be argued due to Holloway's thought that "capitalism, ever since its beginning, has been a movement of enclosure, a movement of converting that which is enjoyed in common into private property" (2010: 29), that which is enjoyed in the sites explored here to some extent, such as free time and the assertion of the right to free association. Therefore if capitalist enclosure is to be resisted, these societies based on the free use of time, which are beginning to appear, according to Gorz, may hold the key. Creating these societies may mean a (re)education, creating commons, open source sharing, and a democratic, effective multitude, such as the one attempted in Occupy's temporary autonomous zone, where the

countervailing discourses allow potential resistance to the manipulation of ruling elites, but now on a more permanent basis.

Holloway (2010: 45) asserts that these varying forms of cracks “can be seen as examples of pre-figurative politics, the idea that the struggle for a different society must create that society through its forms of struggle”. I argue that when people practice a prefigurative politics, they also learn by doing, or as Horton and Freire (1990) might say, ‘we make the road by walking’.

Prefiguration also describes the idea that “if you can embody the change you struggle for, you have already won – not by fighting but by becoming” (Holloway, 2010: 45). This, in essence was what Occupy claimed to be trying to achieve, they attempted to ‘become’ the society they wanted to live in and create cracks in their schooled selves and others. According to Shor (1996: 62), Horton and Freire (1990) also insist that “we discover what can be done by doing, despite our beliefs that little can get done at a certain moment, and despite our theories about what should happen compared to what actually does”.

According to Holloway (2010: 94-5), our lives are not woven together by the state producing schemes to improve social cohesion, as is often assumed. It is through the abstraction of labour, the synthesis of these relations are formed through the abstraction of “doing” (concrete labour in Marxist terms) into “labour” (abstract labour in Marxist terms). This is the problem that the cracks face, our lived abstraction from our ‘doing’, our *socially* necessary labour, which is why as Merrifield (2011: 112) says, many rebellions are founded on acts of negation:

on resisting and resistance, on refusal, on saying NO, on fighting against a force with which one disagrees, sometimes putting one’s life

on the line. It's an act of fending off, of fighting *against* job cuts, *against* neoliberalism, *against* a fascist state, *against* the government, *against* bourgeois policies, *against* the WTO. Negation is quite rightly the stuff of radical politics; but it isn't the stuff dreams are made of.

These ideas can be seen as far back as when La Boétie (1548/2002) was writing, so are the potential 'cracks' such as Occupy anything different from the age old resistance and refusal of the Voluntary Servitude talked of by La Boétie? "A crack" according to Holloway (2010: 84) "is the perfectly ordinary creation of a space or moment in which we assert a different type of doing". He insists that "the cracks are revolts of one type of doing against another type of doing". Here the revolt of education against schooling might be considered; the capitalist way of doing that commodifies and encloses all our social relations and the rebellious way of doing, the reassertion of ourselves as agentic beings into social relations of our choosing and our imagining. That this agentic doing comes from negation is possibly not as problematic as one might think, as Freire (1998: 45) insists, "anger should be a right as long as it is appropriate and is not allowed to degenerate into rage or even hatred". Nevertheless, the reassertion of our agentic selves should, supposedly, compensate for any possible degenerate rage or hatred and create those countervailing discourses, because in Occupy's prefigurative context, they are apparently living their imaginings, their desires and they are, temporally, attempting to not make the capitalism that is creating their rage, which consumes people to produce their hatred. This "subversion of politics" (Katsiaficas, 2006: 6); the reinvention of revolution by ignoring the state and capitalist relations instead of fighting them head on, in this case by creating that space for new discourses to arise has to mean, according to Katsiaficas, that we need "a complete reorientation of our understanding of

the role of nation states and individual obedience to their laws". This obedience is currently censored by the application of force, from both the violence of militarisation and of precarity, disobedience involves a personal risk, mediated by the type of violence that can be inflicted for the types of disobedience enacted, it is not an easy choice. However, the problems are probably inevitable, and it is "important not to romanticise the cracks, or give them a positive force that they do not possess" (Holloway, 2010: 20).

Holloway emphasises that "the purpose of the cracks is not to produce a community of saints but to establish a different form of relations between people. They cannot be based on purity, or on puritanism" (p. 64). "And yet, this is where we start: from the cracks, the fissures, the rents, the spaces of rebellious negation-and-creation" (p. 20). This notion is pertinent because the argument is that the master should not be toppled only to be replaced by a new master, ochlocracy should not abound (Thrasher, 1927), nor populist leaders installed (Arditi, 2008) only to school us otherwise. However, if this can be avoided, these hoped-for and worked-for possibilities which seek unexpected openings despite the limits of an age have been called 'untested feasibility' by Freire (1994).

Shor (1996: 61) wonders "how much alternative thought is possible in lives crowded with distractions and work but not with critical learning or dissident culture?" For both Holloway and Freire it is this crowding of our lives that needs to be addressed, as I have shown, Holloway refers to this phenomena as alienation, whereas it can be seen in Freire's work as "cultural invasion" (1993a: 162). Cultural invasion, for Freire is a form of alienation in which a culture outside of the individuals human 'doing' "kills the creative enthusiasm" of those individuals, groups and whole cultures who are

invaded, “leaving them hopeless and fearful of risking experimentation, without which there is no true creativity”. This notion of cultural invasion makes the act of creating the ‘cracks’ seem very difficult indeed. It also gives rise to the problem that the cracks themselves might practice some form of cultural invasion upon each other in order to fight the totality of capitalist relations and form a totalising form of counter-culture. Whilst on the surface, this may seem the answer to the problem of cracking capitalism, it must be remembered that the cracks are ways in which to assert individual and collective will to reinvigorate human doing (or concrete labour), this may be different for each individual group or community. Therefore any attempt at creating a counter-totality could be seen as just another form of oppressive cultural invasion, hence Holloway’s insistence that difference is not to be seen as a barrier or as gaps between the cracks, but as a radical democratic way of life where there can always be space for countervailing discourse and debate. Holloway argues that

The central issue is not consciousness but sensitivity: the ability to recognise insubordinations that are not obvious and the capacity to touch those insubordinations. Consciousness or understanding certainly plays a role, but it cannot be a question of bringing consciousness from the outside but of drawing out that which is already present in undeveloped form, of bringing different experiences into resonance with one another. This takes us to a politics not of talking but of listening, or of listening-and-talking, a politics of dialogue rather than monologue.

(Holloway, 2010: 77)

The question then becomes twofold: How, as Shor alluded to earlier, do we create critical awareness and space for emergent discourse in our crowded, capitalist social synthesis, and how do we create within ourselves and others the sensitivity to recognise the cracks created by others?

5.4 Developing the mechanisms for sensitivity and critical awareness

Holloway (2010) and others (Conant, 2010; Ross, 2006; Vodovnik, 2004) say that the Zapatistas, an indigenous Mexican community that have created what appears to be a large 'crack' (including a great deal of autonomous education) in the social fabric of Mexican Capitalism, have a saying: '*caminamos, no corremos, porque vamos muy lejos*' (we walk, we do not run, because we are going very far). The Zapatistas remind the rest of the dissenting world that we cannot change the world without taking power overnight. Their movement seems to insist that what should underlie the ruptures in the synthesis, the big displays of negation, the rallies and demonstrations against this closure, or that privatisation, or policy decision is authentic change. Holloway insists that we have to walk, and walk with our eyes open because as he says, "the revolt of doing creates a new constellation of struggles that often do not recognise themselves as part of the same constellation" (2010: 198). This is because there is possibly no one way to enact the revolt of doing but instead a myriad of resistances, of dissenting actions, a constellation of struggles as he puts it. Here it is argued that Occupy is one, the SSC another and even the University of Lincoln, and so, in its way, is this thesis. However, although they are connected, they are not the same. Therefore an understanding may be needed of the mechanisms that create solidarity between the 'constellation of struggles' whilst not inducing a 'cultural invasion' as Freire insists. One of the reasons for avoiding a homogenising of the individual struggles through even a well-intentioned form of cultural invasion is because, as Freire (1993a: 66) says,

“any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence”. I would argue that it is pertinent to remember Holloways warning, “however much we try to do something different, the contradictions of capitalism reproduce themselves within our revolt¹². We are not pure subjects, however rebellious we might be. The cracks, both as spaces of liberation and as painful ruptures, run inside of us too” (2010: 64). This is why I argue that the Zapatista assertion that we walk because we have a long way to go is crucial, according to this view, we are not only fighting capitalism on the outside, we are fighting it on the inside too:

domination itself is objectively divisive. It maintains the oppressed I in a position of ‘adhesion’ to a reality which seems all powerful and overwhelming, and then alienates by presenting mysterious forces which are regarded as responsible for a reality about which nothing can be done. The individual is divided between identical past and present, and a future without hope. He or she is a person who does not perceive him/herself as becoming; hence cannot have a future built in unity with others. But as she or he breaks this ‘adhesion’ and objectifies the reality from which he or she starts to emerge, the person begins to integrate as a Subject (an I) confronting an object (reality). At this moment, sundering the false unity of the divided self, one becomes a true individual.

(Freire, 1993a: 154)

There is the need perhaps to understand how the process of sundering the false unity of the divided self comes about. If individuals are to resolve this tension of the divided self, the self that adheres to ‘reality’ as Freire put it, enters into voluntary servitude, as La Boétie (1548/2002) might say, then maybe the question should be whether we understand our situation as

¹² One example of this may be the Co-op Bank, who, at the time of writing have been discovered to have a massive amount of corruption in their ranks, to the point where it was revealed that they had a £1.5billion deficit in their balance sheet, causing it to stop being a mutual and be floated on the stock market with shares being sold to Hedge fund managers, this affected the rest of the Co-operative group and threatening their survival. For details see <https://www.co-operativebank.co.uk/customerservices/announcements>

complete and permanent, whether we feel we know the 'truth' or whether our knowledge about 'reality' is partial and temporally situated. McLaren (1995: 15) states that this is the "task of the ... critical educator – to live with courage and conviction with the understanding that knowledge is always partial and incomplete". Which is why critical pedagogy seems to 'fit the bill' as a mechanism to develop sensitivity to the struggles and critical awareness of the situation that they evolve within, giving space for new countervailing discourses to emerge.

However, as McLaren (2000: 15) warns, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* cannot be taken as a 'rule book' and implanted in our own time and space. McLaren insists that "the globalisation of capital and the consolidation of neoliberal education policies demand not only a vigorous and on-going engagement with Freire's work, but also a reinvention of Freire in the context of debates global economic restructuring, and the effort to develop new modes of revolutionary struggle". Following this notion, this work seeks to explore whether this is happening in Occupy and the other sites. One of vital conditions of exploring this 'vigorous and on-going engagement' and beginning a 'reinvention of Freire' is advocated by Freire himself (1993a: 42), when he asserts that "trusting the people is the indispensable precondition for revolutionary change". Is this trust being attempted in Occupy, the SSC and SaP to varying extents? This brings the argument back once again to Holloway's notion of using trust as an organising principle. The question then becomes, how should this trust be created in a world where competition and envy have become a way of life, where in both schools and the workplace individuals are kept in positions of precarity (Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2012; Harvey, 2011; The Invisible Committee, 2009) which engender

mistrust, even when people appear to be working toward the same goal; this is the capitalist co-option of cooperation at work (Marx, 1867/1990). The answer, perhaps, is to start once again from the particular, to show commitment to each other's cognitive health, to engender critical thinking in all people. This starting from the particular seemed to be obvious from my experience of Occupy and somewhat so in the SSC and SaP. Each person is a particular, a unit of change, if you like, the actions in these sites attempted to create the politics of the first person heard about earlier. The idea, at least, of the pedagogy in these sites, whether explicitly expressed or not, is to create critical thinkers.

Brookfield (2001: 5) tells us this about critical thinking, "critical thinkers are actively engaged in life. They appreciate creativity, they are innovators, and they exude a sense that life is full of possibilities", however, this does still not create the trust apparently needed but goes a long way to creating the conditions for individuals to create 'cracks' in their relationships with capitalism through the expression of countervailing discourses at least as the sense of imminent possibility might encourage individuals to enact those possibilities. However, Brookfield (2001: 7) goes on to add that "emotions are central to the critical thinking process" and Ollis (2012: 216) attests, "humans are emotional beings and the emotions are central to any learning process", Polletta (2006) further confirms that emotions take a central place in protest and politics. We also feel, according to Brookfield (p.7) "joy, release, relief and exhilaration" as we find new ways of thinking about and viewing our personal and political worlds. This emotionality was evident in the aspects of Occupy that I observed and the Occupiers I spoke to, but in no simple way and the discussion is here primarily to underscore that sundering the false

unity of the divided self and becoming a true individual as Freire insisted earlier is no simple or logical act.

However, as several thinkers agree (see for example Holloway, 2010; Brookfield, 2001; Freire, 1993a; among others) finding the right time and motivation to encourage critical thinking is essential in the context of the political juncture in which this enquiry sits; Castells (2012: 15) offers this:

if any individuals feel humiliated, exploited, ignored or misrepresented, they are ready to transform their anger into action, as soon as they overcome their fear. And they overcome their fear by the extreme expression of anger, in the form of outrage....The faster and more interactive the process of communication is, the more likely the formation of a process of collective action becomes, rooted in outrage, propelled by enthusiasm and motivated by hope.

Groups and organisations that already exist and new ones in formation as a result of this 'outrage' might be well served by rising to the opportunity and creating this fast and interactive communication by way of displaying and encouraging critical thinking. I argue this because of the following notions proposed by Brookfield: (1) "critical thinkers see the future as open and malleable, not as closed and fixed. They are self-confident about their potential for changing aspects of their worlds, both as individuals and through collective action." (p. 5), and (2) "critical thinkers become immediately suspicious of those who say they have all the answers to all of life's problems." (p. 9). If these notions are correct, then the people within these groups should be well placed to create the cracks in capitalism. In addition, under this assumption the pedagogy of the popular education of Occupy and the attempts at change from the other sites become essential elements of the overall political project, as once again, starting from the particular, the individual, change may occur.

According to Shor (1996: 163), these notions also fit Freire's (1993a) definition of critical consciousness as "subjective intervention into history, as consciousness of, for, and against something, as 'intentionality' vis-à-vis social experience, a reaching out to rethink reality and to act purposefully in it". If critical thinking, leading to a critical consciousness, which engenders acting purposefully through subjective intervention into history, takes place in collectives and groups, then, it could be argued, trust would have to become the centrally organising principle, it would, if the argument were to be followed, be a definite precondition of any social change. This trust would therefore, as Holloway (2010: 261) proposes it must, "break the walls around our thinking, the rigidification of our thought", with this newly developed critical consciousness individuals should then have the potential to "break the walls by refusing to build them" (Holloway, 2010: 261). What is more, the conditions seem to have the potential at the present historical moment as Katsiaficas (2006: 244) reminds us, in "periods of economic decline, like that currently experienced by industrial workers in advanced capitalist societies under post-Fordist conditions, the locus and content of social movements assume new forms". Therefore, if social movements are the groups and collectives spoken about here, then they could have the potential to become the mechanisms for building sensitivity and critical awareness.

However, in the past, and indeed in the literature, critical thinking, critical consciousness and revolutionary change have usually had a teacher, a leader, a vanguard. In the next section, I will discuss, through further review of the literature, what the possible conditions are for disposing of these old roles in creating revolutionary subjects from the people who are angry and outraged. Merrifield (2011: 133) says that we need more

zone[s] of indistinguishability, another space of slippage, a space in which there's a lot of spontaneous energy as well as a few signs indicating where to go and what time the action begins. We need a new space of slippage in which we can organise and strategize, act without self-consciously performing, encounter others without walls, and hatch en masse a daring Great Escape from capitalism.

These zones of indistinguishability, spaces of slippage, it is argued here, can be seen as education, as learning, as personal development, whatever name one wishes to place on the human activity that increases knowledge, the capacity to act and understand and the exercise of the collective imagination. However, it is important to fully understand this romantic notion, a zone indistinguishable from what, slipping to and from where? The indistinguishability comes from the notion of the boundary police spoken of in the last chapter by Foust (2010), a space which is not too far from normative practice to be noticed by the boundary policing authorities, but slipping enough from hegemonic control to be of some revolutionary worth. These sites that are not yet so alternative that they are crushed, co-opted or disintegrate from the disappointment of unrealistic expectations, but have the ethos of creation, of spontaneity, of sociality reborn. Occupy was seen to be more than a space of slippage, it certainly did not escape the boundary policing authorities of public life, of the mass media and of the state. Perhaps however, the SSC is a site of slippage, indistinguishable from other community projects that do not threaten the status quo, but with the potential to slip incrementally further from the control of elites to the point where the Great Escape can be hatched?

5.5 Freire's leaders vs Holloways autonomy, the case of the ignorant school master and a power-sharing pedagogy

Contemporary forms of Open Marxism (see Bonefeld, *et al.*, 1992; Della Costa, 1995; Fine, 1995; Gerstenberger, 1992; Gunn, 1992; Negri, 1992) call for the abandonment of revolutionary leaders promising us a future revolution, leaving revolution as a perpetual possibility and never a present reality. In these ideas, it is argued variously that there is no longer the need for Trade Unions, for example, negotiating what Holloway calls the “new terms of our enslavement” (also see Gorz, 1997; The Invisible Committee, 2009; Lotringer & Marazzi, 2007, among others). Therefore, working in this context, a further exploration of the literature with the express purpose of understanding the relevance and necessity of the pedagogue, the educational vanguard, if you like, in education needs to take place.

For this purpose I wish to explore the work of Ira Shor and Jacques Rancière. Setting Ira Shor and Jacques Rancière into ‘debate’, particularly when operationalised through analysis of the data in the following Chapter, provides a way of drawing out what is at stake because in Rancière’s book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, he posits an interesting argument which connects with Occupy’s refrain ‘anyone can teach, everyone can learn’ (Tent City University, 2012), and therefore may give some theoretical insight the pedagogy in Occupy. Whereas in Shor’s work, a democratic, power sharing pedagogy is defined wherein the ‘teacher’ is still the ‘teacher’ but invites a shared power in the pedagogical space. Therefore, putting them into debate potentially allows for the development of an understanding of the (un)necessity of the teacher in an emancipating pedagogy in addition to a possible understanding of what is it that emancipates people from a passive

reception of learning, and therefore the logic of capitalism that pervades their lives. I will start the debate by exploring some general thoughts from various educators and educational theorists before concentrating on these two particular schools of thought, in order to attempt to understand ‘people’ - as *producers of knowledge* (Roggero, 2011; Neary, 2012; Neary & Amsler, 2012) and then move onto the detailed debate. So, how does one become a producer of knowledge?

Dewey (1997: 67) has this to offer as a starting point; “there is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process”. The starting notion, then, is that any learner has to be involved in the *formation of the purposes* of education. The learner must be in charge of, not only the content of their learning, but also the purpose for which they are learning it. This notion rules out the ‘banking’ of officially sanctioned knowledge into learners (Freire, 1993a) of ‘truth’. This may at first glance suggest merely a critical education, such as that proposed in the last section, however, Holloway’s warning that “teachers who take their schools to create a critical education may possibly reproduce authoritarian practices as bad as those which they are rejecting” (2010: 19) is pertinent, especially in the contexts being explored here. Care must be taken, therefore, to be very careful not to allow a radical concept of education and social change to be subsumed into the liberal discourse of individual empowerment and emancipation, which, according to some leads only to producing better consumers, and a better army of workers for the purposes of capital (Allman, 2010; Au & Apple, 2009; Marx, 1867/1990; Reitz, 2000). The critical

pedagogy that this work proposes, is *at the very least* what Freire (1993a:

36) espouses:

the pedagogy of the oppressed...has two distinct stages. In the first, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through praxis commit themselves to its transformation. In the second stage, in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy for all people in the process of permanent liberation. In both stages, it is always through action in depth that the culture of domination is culturally confronted.

Thus, creating a conscientised oppressed people that will transform the conditions of their lives rendering oppression defunct, this is because, as is argued here as in the work of Freire, the more people who become conscientised and committed to transformational praxis, the less oppressors tactics will be successful in seducing the people into conditions of consensual oppression (Herman & Chomsky, 1994; La Boétie, 1548/2002). I use the term consensual oppression for, it could be argued, as long as people do not want to acknowledge the oppressive conditions of their lives, or do not see their condition as oppressed, then they are consenting to oppressive practices. As Freire says above, the pedagogy becomes a *process of permanent liberation*, through deep cultural confrontation with any culture of domination. The question therefore, is how do we prevent emerging cultures of domination, especially when even in Freire's work, there is a pedagogical vanguardism that could, in itself become a dominating force, as Holloway suggested.

I now wish to examine in detail, first Rancière's work and then, later, Shor's, in order to utilise their arguments as a framework for the analysis of the data in the next chapter. I have chosen to operationalise their work in this way to

attempt to ensure that a sufficiently full exploration of their works are included to assist analysis and understanding of the issues and stakes present in the sites under exploration.

In his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991: 4), Rancière examines the work of Joseph Jacotot, whose explorations in teaching led him to wonder, “were the schoolmaster’s explications ... superfluous? Or, if they weren’t, to whom and for what were they useful?” In other words, did learning need an ‘expert teacher’? The point of Jacotot’s, and therefore Rancière’s, argument is that no one who considers themselves a learner needs a teacher to *explain* their learning, neither the content, nor the reason for learning, to them. Additional ideas on this notion could also be gleaned from The School of Barbiana (1969) in Italy, where the children taught themselves, but for this discussion I shall limit the ideas to those posited by Rancière¹³. The issues explored in Rancière’s book also illuminate the notion that no one person knows everything and that all individuals are ignorant in some sense or other. This notion ties in, also, to the idea expressed earlier in this chapter that knowledge is always partial and temporary. The title of the book, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, also sheds some light on the dichotomy of ‘Master’s’ and ‘the ignorant’, in that it posits the Master as the ignorant and thus allows for the intelligence of the student, the multitude, the democratic subject to be announced, thus *potentially* providing a way of thinking about the removal of the Master without having to replace the figure with another. In light of the pedagogical and political theses under examination in this work, this is an

¹³ In his book, Rancière potentially indicates, due to the lack of the female pronoun ‘she’ that his thesis only pertains to male learners and Masters, whilst the lack of acknowledgement of women is shocking, I will not take up this issue in this work.

important argument for the kind of autonomous prefigurative politics I have already discussed.

Creating the conditions and possibilities for the production and sharing of knowledge is, for many critical educators, the most essential role of the teacher or pedagogue (see, for example Giroux, 1988, 2001, 2011; Macrine, 2009; Mayo, 2004; Shor, 1992, 1996; Shor & Freire, 1987). At the heart of what Rancière calls 'universal teaching', that is teaching what one does not know, in order to create emancipated subjects, however, is the idea of equality of intelligence. It is this foundation that, he insists, is missing from other educational projects, even ones that claim to be emancipatory:

explication is the myth of pedagogy, the parable of a world divided into knowing minds and ignorant ones, ripe minds and immature ones, the capable and the incapable, the intelligent and the stupid.

(p. 6)

In other words, the foundational belief underpinning traditional explicative pedagogy is that intelligence is nurtured through teaching; one begins education stupid and finishes it intelligent, through the efforts of the knowing and capable minds of the pedagogues. These are argued to be attractive myths for those who wish to subjugate the production of lived knowledge and oppress those whom society does not deem worthy of entering their grand institutions of learning. Rancière argues, however, that a "peasant, an artisan, will be intellectually emancipated if he thinks about what he is and what he does in the social order" (p. 33). This can be accomplished with "a minimum of instruction, drawn from the principles of reason, science and the general interest" (p. 34). This intellectual emancipation constituted by the learner thinking about what they are in the social order resonates with

Freire's (1993, 1998, 2008) arguments about conscientization. In Freire's view, people are conscientised when they become aware of their place in society, locally, nationally and globally, their political awareness is heightened by this understanding and therefore their capacity to act upon the conditions of their own existence is extended. In the view of critical pedagogy, this is how the unveiling of oppression to the oppressed is achieved, or perhaps, as Ranci  re puts it: "to put sane notions into the heads that would otherwise form faulty ones" (p.34).

Ranci  re's justification for universal teaching, or what a Freirean might term teaching through a questioning pedagogy what one does not know oneself, is simple:

there is no one on earth who hasn't learnt something by himself and without a master explicator...universal teaching has existed since the beginning of the world, alongside all of the explicative methods

(p. 16)

It becomes apparent from this that the main argument as to why universal teaching would work, is that it is a human trait, hard wired since birth, to learn, by observing, by questioning and by trial and error. One might ask at this point why are we not all using this method of universal teaching? This is however, where we return to the earlier discussion about mechanisms of sensitivity to the cracks in capitalism: how do we recognise the cracks and how do we prevent them from being consumed by the logic of capital.

Ranci  re offers this:

how can the learned master ever understand that he can teach what he doesn't know as successfully as what he does know? He cannot but take that increase in intellectual power as a devaluation of his science. And the ignorant one, on his side, doesn't believe himself capable of learning by himself, still less of being able to teach another ignorant person. Those excluded from the world of intelligence

themselves subscribe to the verdict of their exclusion. In short, the circle of emancipation must be begun.

(p. 15-6)

Herein lies the problem, I argue. Everyone in this social relation of learning must *believe* certain fundamental things about themselves and others in order for universal teaching to become commonplace, workable and accepted. This is, again, where the debate returns to the tenets of critical pedagogy and of Holloway's thesis. Freire, as previously examined, insisted that the levels, modes and logic of oppression must firstly be unveiled to the oppressed in order for them to become emancipated. Holloway (2010; 212-3), on the other hand, talks in terms of "character masks", wherein the character masks that we don in our forced social roles hide a deeper conflict within ourselves, where there is no pure human being waiting to be emancipated but a disfigured, shadowy figure (p. 222). He argues that what is needed is a dialogue that tries to "see and hear and touch the shadowy figure behind the character masks" (p. 225), which would "give voice to and stir the passions and dignities that lie below" (p. 226). Only then can the emancipation that Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster hopes to engender be accomplished, because as Rancière maintains,

to emancipate an ignorant person, one must be, and one need only be, emancipated oneself, that is to say, conscious of the true power of the human mind. The ignorant person will learn by himself what the master doesn't know if the master believes he can and obliges him to realise his capacity

(p. 15)

Therefore, it seems that a tension exists in this argument about how to begin. I actually found that Rancière's thesis is most persuasive and indeed seems to be in keeping with my radical reading of critical pedagogy in certain ways; both its insistence in the equality of intelligence, as a foundational starting

point for any emancipatory learning¹⁴, and with the notion that the project has to be begun by an emancipated pedagogue in order to start the cycle; in Rancière's words:

we know that it is this that defines the stultifying vision of the world: to believe in the reality of inequality, to imagine that the superiors in society are truly superior, and that society would be in danger if the idea should spread, especially among the lower classes, that this superiority is only a conventional fiction. In fact, only an emancipated person is untroubled by the idea that the social order is entirely conventional

(p. 109)

As Rancière points out, in effect the project of universal teaching cannot be begun in mainstream educational establishments as

how, without opening up an abyss under their own feet, can they [those that are tasked with the governance of our education systems] say to working people that they don't need them in order to be free men, in order to be educated in everything suitable to their dignity as men?

(p. 129)

Therefore, I would argue that we need to return to subversive cracks in order to begin this project, sites of slippage and radical, emancipated pedagogues, as those with a vested interest in the status quo it is argued here as elsewhere, cannot be trusted to begin the project, as Rancière has pointed out above. Where then to begin the project as the 'vanguard' of this method, whilst avoiding the traps of a permanent vanguardism and potential slide into oppressive regression?

¹⁴ Some readings of critical pedagogy do not agree with this point, see for example Biesta and Bingham (2010) Jacques Rancière: Education, Truth, Emancipation. London, New York: Continuum.

5.6 The Power Sharing Classroom – Ira Shor and When Students Have Power

It is here I now want to examine the work of Ira Shor, and in particular his reflexive book *When Students Have Power* (1996) which examines democratic pedagogy. Because the politics of Occupy were apparently democratic and horizontal, then maybe a pedagogy that reflects these values has the potential to lead to a greater understanding and uncover untested feasibilities for the sites explored here. Shor insists that in educational settings, before teaching any disciplinary content and conflicts among scholars in our chosen fields teachers must first “face the always already existing conflicts between students and the teacher, between students and the institution, between students and the economic system and between students and themselves” (Shor, 1996: 17). This conflict was evident from several of the Occupiers who told me they had no education and no jobs and therefore would be of no interest to my study, indicating that this conflict was debilitating in terms of self-esteem. Shor insists that one of the ways that these conflicts can be addressed is by what he calls the ‘withering away of the teacher’ (1992; 1996). Shor stresses that this withering away is not to suggest that the teacher is to be got rid of all together, but merely in a symbolic sense and in the specific sense of the ultimate power of the teacher being shared within the classroom setting with all of the pedagogical participants. Shor warns thusly: “years of socialisation have led us to internalise the unilateral authority of the teacher as the normal ‘common sense’ way to do education” (1996: 27) and reflects that “without formal participation in decision making, students develop as authority-dependent subordinates, not as independent citizens” (p. 31). The Occupiers I met were

participating in decision-making, but as we shall see in the next chapter, their participation was not formal and therefore sometimes ended up feeling disempowering. However, it is this dynamic that is the crux of the issue for Shor, the participation in formal decision making, not, as for Rancière, the teacher's explication. However, where Shor and Rancière do seem to agree, if one reads an unspoken assumption into Shor's work, is that education should be founded upon a belief in the equality of intelligence. I would argue that the justification for this assumption can be found throughout Shor's works as one cannot insist that students can fully participate in formal decision making without being equally intelligent as the teacher. What Shor does say, however, is that "it is risky to hand over authority to the students all at once. That could be bewildering and unproductive, even arrogant" (p. 18). Later in the book, Shor elaborates on the reasons why this is so:

the students don't see themselves constructed intellectually and emotionally by the 'system' and its machinery. It sometimes feels to me like we are living in two different worlds, their blithely ignoring hegemony and mine ferociously foregrounding it, theirs a place of autonomous individuality and self-creation while my world is a place of the socially constructed self. They focus on individualism and self-reliance, two hegemonic values deeply embedded in corporate society, but which they experience contradictorily as values through which to resist the 'system'.

(p. 103)

Therefore, for Shor, one might assume it is this socialisation that has led to the students seeing themselves as autonomous individuals, self-constructed rather than seeing themselves in relation to hegemony - resisting the system with the very values it itself instils in them - that is the problem, not the explications of the master, as in Rancière's view. However, on further examination, Shor comes back to the idea espoused earlier by Freire,

through his power sharing methods that the teacher, or the pedagogue, creates the conditions for learning, not merely transmits what is to be learned. One of the questions for Occupy particularly, but also the other sites, is that of whether these conditions for learning were being created without the assistance of a skilled pedagogue. Shor describes how students become empowered by sharing power with the teacher, by participating in the 'formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process' as Dewey insisted earlier. Shor's students very much direct the process in the classroom. However, Shor is not attempting to teach what he does not know. Shor's students are not autonomous learners in this sense; Shor insists that he is not attempting to produce autonomous, but collective learners. He asserts that he is attempting to engender a classroom culture of criticality, through a democratic critical pedagogy:

the borders of critical culture appear when a discourse questions existing knowledge and unequal power relations, when it imagines democratic alternatives departing from authoritarian business-as-usual, when it connects subjectivity to history while relating personal contexts to social contexts and academic texts, when it situates the theme of 'social justice' at the centre of knowledge-making enterprise

(p. 180)

One of the emergent questions of this work, then, becomes whether a critical culture can appear through a *popular education*, such as Occupy seemed to be, that is apparently doing the very things that Shor refers to in the quote above. Shor describes in the book how he used his expertise, his assumed authority as a white male professor in a community college to create the conditions for reaching, at least the borders of, a critical culture if not creating a micro-culture in his classroom. However, could this be achieved on the streets in Occupy, the SSC or even SaP, as well as the social centres and

public spaces, enclosed by capitalist social relations? Holloway (2010: 95) insists that “going to the root of things and understanding that root as our own activity is crucial” this, I argue, can be read in both Shor and Rancière as an agreed fundamental; that the education we practice has to be a ‘root’ of society and therefore has to be *our own activity*. In all the sites explored here, creating an educative practice that is the learner’s own activity has been attempted, but to how much success? What more could be asked of these sites? Rancière seems to understand this notion of the necessity of education being the activity of those taking part and felt that ‘universal teaching’ could never be a “social method” and therefore could not be “propagated in and by social institutions” (1991: 105). He also argues that “government doesn’t owe the people an education, for the simple reason that one doesn’t owe people what they can take for themselves. And education is like liberty: it isn’t given, it’s taken” (p. 107). Perhaps if education is understood in this way, as like liberty, something that cannot be given or even provided for us, then the idea, declared by Occupy, that ‘anyone can teach, everyone can learn’ becomes crucial to the understanding of how an emancipatory pedagogy, with the specific aim of escaping from capitalist enclosure and creating a new form of commonism (Neary & Winn, 2012; Shantz, 2013), can be constituted. However, further to this, the notion of ‘taking’ education rather than it being granted also speaks of the *demand* to do things differently, it becomes therefore, not about promoting interests as with schooling, but about having a voice, demand requires constituting the multitude’s voice, creating countervailing discourses, as does a radical form of democracy. Is it so then, that the multitude demands, in its multiplicity, that radical education provides us with the necessary know how to produce a

commons that becomes a shared symbolic place for creative responses (Mouffe, 2013) to social problems, responded to by the strength of our differences (Hardt & Negri, 2004), rather than our consensus?

Shor says that his classroom was “very busy, intense, and often difficult as well as conflicted, but it was also ...convivial and enchanting.” (p. 126). This, it could be argued, is surely an attribute of radical democratic culture in general and particularly deliberative democracy, as can be seen in the works of Mouffe (2005, 2013), Rancière (1998, 2004, 2011), Merrifield (2011), among others. Rose (1990: 238) has this to say on the subject; “democratic culture is, by definition, vibrant and dynamic, discomfiting and unpredictable. It gives rise to apprehension; freedom is not always calming”. Holloway adds, “we light a match: that gives light and heat, but if a spark flies, the whole forest catches fire, then the flame acquires a different meaning” (2010: 73). I argue that this idea can be read as relating to either the spreading cracks in capitalism, as was intended, or as the disquieting effects of democracy, even pedagogical democracy, or even as the power sharing methods espoused by Shor.

In his practice, Shor insists that he attempts to

search for the untested and unpredictable openings at the margins and in the cracks of the group I was approaching, where I might find territory less captured by the status quo, where some critical thought, civic ideals, and democratic relations were possible even in conservative times

(p. 3)

He admits that if the power-sharing, critical and democratic lessons were at the behest of the students “an entirely different counterhegemonic politics

would be represented” (p. 75) and as a result his efforts are “a cultural exercise or laboratory, not a social movement of broad change in school and society” (p.74). However, this recognition, although important, need not take away from the discussion underway here, nor the references to Occupy.

What Shor found during his cultural exercise or laboratory teaching was what he describes as becoming

repositioned in the process as a special participant, not exactly equal to the students and not exactly separate from them either. Affectively, in power sharing, I experience a changing role which feels like moving with instead of pushing, a lightness of being part of instead of the weightiness of being solely in charge of. Shared authority is thus a transformative ‘apparatus of power’.... a means to overcome unilateral authority by democratising power relations and a means to critically study subject matter

(p. 154).

This feeling that Shor describes has potential importance for understanding how a vanguard of educators might be created, who can then relinquish that power, ensuring that the teacher vanguard does not become a dominant authority who can then exercise unilateral power over students, or learners. I argue that the implications of this are many, instead of officially sanctioned knowledge being ‘banked’ into learners a carefully orchestrated production of living knowledge, garnered from the sometimes antagonistic democratic relations of a classroom in which the power is shared may be possible. A new relationship between learners and teachers could be brought to bear on the pedagogical process, one in which the learners would have an active and collective role in productively policing the authority of the teacher. Therefore ensuring that the learners’ voice was heard not only in the production of knowledge but also in the way that knowledge was handled and transmitted from subject to subject, thus potentially ensuring that there could be no real

hidden ideologies in the education being practiced. In this context, the teacher need not relinquish his or her position as 'expert' in a particular field, as Rancière feels is imperative for emancipation to ensue, but would have that expertise examined for signs of ideological positioning and manipulation by learners. The pedagogical relationship would, hypothetically, become one of mutual respect and collective self-monitoring. This could then continue to the learners then being able to collectively manage their own learning independent of the teacher. Following this notion, the teacher and their expertise become a 'springboard' from which the learners, autonomously of the teacher, continue their learning through collective discussion and dialogue, switching to a form of universal teaching. With these logical assumptions I argue that this is where this particular reading of the theory progresses to. As Freire says throughout his work, critical pedagogy creates the conditions for learning to take place: it does not emancipate on its own, it cannot unveil a single truth. However, what he claims it does - and I would argue this is evidenced in the reflective writings of Shor and others (see for example Bahruth & Steiner, 2000; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1988) – is create a problematisation of the everyday lives of oppressed peoples and reflect those conditions back to them as an objective problem to be collectively solved (Freire, 1993a). In turn, this allows for objective distance from the issues, conflicts and woes of lived experience. Placed in a more modern context, this technique of problem posing has the potential to allow individuals and groups to think and imagine differently. It can allow people to step outside the subjective view of their own lives and to relate their worries to the large social milieu and view them as connected to the whole and socially constructed as dominant and oppressive practices. The expertise of

the teacher, both in subject content and in delivery of the pedagogy, then creates the conditions for the oppressed peoples to emancipate themselves. Simply put, critical pedagogy asks learners to think of the personal as political, thus enabling a connection to others and hopefully creations of common goals against domination, oppression and exploitation.

Having situated the case studies in Chapter Three, and examined the theory that is indicative of the thinking of those involved in the groups, movements and initiatives, pertaining to the pedagogical and educational aspects in this Chapter, I would now like to put the theory into conversation with the data in the following chapter.

Chapter Six - A Conversation between the Theory and the Data

This chapter examines the data through questions raised within the theoretical examination in the previous Chapter and asks whether the pedagogy practiced within the Occupy case study was transformative and emancipating or whether it reproduced forms of schooling, in light of the overall questions posed in the introduction. Therefore, in this Chapter I attempt to understand whether it is possible to dispense with educational organisational forms that currently exist, and introduce new forms containing, and developed by, countervailing discourses, or, indeed, whether this form of organic pedagogy would allow conditioned behaviours to remain unchallenged as no skilled pedagogue was there to pick them up.

I love it here, in the camp. It's so free, we can talk about anything, imagine anything and people are so respectful of other people's views. It's been a great experiment in creating a new society, a society where, even though there are rules, because we need rules to make sure everyone is safe and no one feels threatened or dismissed, so even though there are rules we are really free and pretty much anything goes....unless of course you criticise direct democracy, some of us don't think it's working as most people don't get their say and one person can block everyone else because we have to reach consensus....you can't criticise it though, you'd be, well I don't know, I don't really want to find out what might happen, nobody is talking about it to others here, but I bet there are a few of us who think it....anyway, it's still great here, we really are imagining a different way to do things.....

(Conversations with Occupiers,)

This data extract begins to illuminate the problematic nature of the organic pedagogy being practiced – we are here to dream, to imagine, but what we imagined has to be seen to work and should not be criticised.

In order to understand this problematic nature, I have tried to concentrate the discussion on the conversations, interactions and email communications I had with occupiers to give preference to the *voices* of the *individuals* involved, and to supplement and triangulate these voices where necessary from data collected elsewhere. The nature of these interactions, as discussed in Chapter Three, were conversations, therefore, these are all referenced as ‘conversations with Occupiers’, except where a direct quote from an Occupier is used, these will be in Italics so as not to crowd the text with in-text citation brackets. A secondary note, especially in light of the apparent subjugation of dissenting voices described in the above quote, the issue of confidentiality and anonymity has been a decision that needed much consideration. I decided not to use names or pseudonyms. The reasons for not using people’s names, or indeed pseudonyms, are as follows:

1. I felt using names would inhibit people from speaking and did not want to have some names and not others;
2. Pseudonyms were not employed as I felt that Occupy was very much a movement of individuals, speaking as one: they agreed;
3. People’s opinions may change over time and indeed, over the course of the conversation as reflection on experience took place (this happened in several cases);
4. Finally, what was being said was more important than assigning a ‘character’ to the voice with either a real name or pseudonym.

All the Occupiers and others that I had conversations with agreed to these terms.

The review of the literature, in the last Chapter, that was indicated by the sites gave rise to some fundamental questions to be asked of a fuller reading of the data and these questions have been used for further analysis as shall be seen. As the literature gave us some 'conditions' to ensure that the pedagogy was transformative and equitable, I have attempted to identify those conditions and turn them into several questions that make up the section introductions in this Chapter.

The analysis will separate the three sites, Occupy, the SSC and SaP, into two different sections, as it was felt that each requires a slightly different style of analysis, as they are not comparative nor equally weighted in terms of Occupy's status as case study and the other sites as supplementary material seeking to elicit a trajectory for a radical pedagogy theory. Occupy will be discussed first, after that the SSC and SaP will be discussed in light of the discussion on Occupy in order to address the potential learning from Occupy as it relates to these other contexts.

6.1 Occupy!

This section attempts to put into dialogue the theory and the data around the pedagogy of Occupy, and examines how the identified theory understands Occupy's pedagogical activities and how those activities speak to or challenge each theory. The pedagogical arena is loosely defined; it

encompasses the whole case study, some aspects more than others, as shall be seen.

6.2 How are social relations built from educational activities?

In this section the data generates a picture of whether the learning that took place engaged the Occupiers with new, or alternative, social relations replacing those synthesised by capitalist mechanisms, allowing countervailing discourses to emerge from the assertion of the right to public assembly. It attempts to understand the political as not merely party business, but as the moment when a radical change becomes possible (Rancière, 1995, 1998, 2011), where social and political organisation fall into each other to create the potential conditions for transformative change. Therefore, the issues explored in this section attend to concerns such as whether the education produced a collective experience (Holloway, 2010)? Does the education unveil how individuals view their place in the world and connect the self with the social (Freire, 1993a)? In addition, did the education use the notion of free use of time through the right to public assembly (Holloway, 2010)?

This section illustrates that one of the central tenets of Occupy was that the people I spoke to who were involved in the encampment felt that they needed to reimagine social relations in order for society to move beyond corporate greed and bank bailouts against which they were originally protesting (conversations with Occupiers, 2012-2013; Occupy London LSX, 2012) and therefore these discussions will attempt to identify how and if they achieved this. They claimed to understand that the hegemony of neoliberal

economic theory has an alternative and the Occupiers I spoke to often asserted that that alternative lay in the way individuals connected themselves to each other, to the modes of production and to the sociality of the human experience:

We can't change things if we carry on with capitalism, or neoliberalism. If we try to stick to this system, then they're right, there is no alternative. But if we change the way we think about each other, the way we think about the relationships we have, the idea of sharing rather than owning, if we cooperate instead of competing, then maybe we can get things done. If we just learn to trust each other and think creatively about what things could be like, then I reckon we can change things, yeah.

In light of these notions expressed here, I argue that it is important to examine whether they were learning to change these relations, or what prevented them from doing so, which will be explored in what follows.

Although this data extract seems to affirm that they were at least trying, the previous one indicates that this may have been a façade of a more deeply embedded necessity to be seen to be doing something, rather than letting the unfettered imagination and prefiguration play its course, creating a more complex picture than one might have previously have assumed.

One of the notions that seemed important to the Occupiers I spoke to regarding the forming of social relations that came out of the data was that of the importance of *making connections* with others, connections that were emotional and productive in some way. Meeting and working with new people that one might otherwise never have met was mentioned repeatedly in my conversations with the London Occupiers. The apparently eclectic mix of people within the camps (not necessarily all of them there to be involved with the movement) meant that individuals were coming into contact with people from many different backgrounds. For example, there were homeless

people, middle class people, graduate students, unemployed people, ex-soldiers, full time activists, academics, and many others who were interacting in different ways, sitting around mainly discussing politics; helping each other cope with the cold; making banners and telling stories; providing nourishment and sharing resources. In addition to those who wondered in to attempt to understand what Occupy were doing, something that often entailed quite intense discussions, as I witnessed on several occasions. This mixing with others was reported to have a variety of effects on the people involved. One Occupier told me, *“now I value friendships more and I value the people that I meet and their views more, in [previous professional career], it was all about who you met and why you met them and what they could do for you and now I feel I always have as much to offer as to gain”*. This space, which, they claim, was occupied for the very purpose of creating these counter-hegemonic connections and countervailing discourses, is, I argue, an important site as Shor (1996: 61) asks, “how much alternative thought is possible in lives crowded with distractions and work but not with critical learning or dissident culture?” The claimed inclusivity and space in these people’s lives allowing them to make connections with a variety of others and, they insisted, gave rise to new experiences including the understanding of different epistemologies and worldviews.

I know so much more about other cultures and nationalities since coming here, usually you’re afraid to ask what it’s like being someone else, but here, for the most part, no one minds.

I argue that this notion of understanding different world views is important in the theorisation of the potentially transformative pedagogy as these new experiences and connections between otherwise unacquainted lives can lead to a newly developed sensitivity to the Other and their needs and

desires. In addition, as Brookfield (2001: 17) argues, when we think critically about these new experiences, “we come to realise that the assumptions governing the way we behave.....are, at least partly, the result of cultural factors”.

If the assumption is correct, that the way we behave is partly a result of cultural factors, then the culture of the movement was of particular significance. I was told by most of the people I spoke with that the culture that they were trying to create was a collective one:

We want to create a new type of community, where everything is shared and everyone is equal.

Everyone is an individual, but we are all in this together, as a sort of collective, if you like, we want everyone to have their voice heard, to be involved in everything in some way. Of course everyone has different passions and interests and they are able to do things that particularly interest them, but we all have a say on the big issues, through the GAs and the direct democracy.

This is a collective, everyone has their own story, their own reason for being here, but we are all together, we share everything, including our stories.

and therefore the task of identifying activities that engendered a collective culture was important in the analysis , in order to ensure that this collective ethos and commons was not mere rhetoric, but was a generally prevailing lived experience. The General Assembly (GA) seemed to be a galvanising point to create a collective experience, judging by some of the conversations had early on in the fieldwork process:

on a weekend afternoon, when it was still quite warm in that October [2011], there were hundreds of people, and there were bankers

coming to check [the GA] out, and everybody was there and it was very exciting, fantastic and that's how the whole thing is

That there were also reportedly bankers at the GAs, at least initially, suggests that the movement was indeed at least attempting to be inclusive and more about learning together and sharing ideas to produce new knowledge than about protesting or confronting power head on. This aspect, the inclusiveness of the GAs, gives us a potential glimpse as to how power structures may have been adapted to become inclusive to those in power, in this case the bankers, but not to be “shaped by social structures, by our incorporation into the social context and by the existing relations of power” as Steinklammer (2012: 29) says is usual. The dynamics of power were potentially being changed through the GA, from a power that excludes - that of normative capitalist relations - to a power that allows encompassment of all (Mouffe, 1999), as long as that power was indeed felt by all involved. If this is so, then an educative experience can arise from such a power structure as Shor (Shor in Macrine, 2009: 121) acknowledges when he says that

Given that education is a social experience, that all social experience is formative, and that all formative experiences embed one value system or another it is impossible, then, to form or shape humans in any manner without implicating norms and orientations for thought and action, which is a synonym for ideology..... Education is politics, then, simply because it develops students and teachers this way or that way depending on the values underlying the learning process.

These values and ideology of inclusiveness on one hand should serve to open the movement up to those who might not normally become involved in collective action, or to those who merely want to know what discourses are taking place. On the other hand, this inclusiveness disrupts Shor's view that

all social, formative experiences embed one value system or another, as the attempted process of Occupy was claimed to be to prefigure new, sometimes unexplored, value systems. The ideology was reportedly 'post-ideological' (conversations with Occupiers; Occupy London LSX, 2012), so what values were underlying the learning process? We have seen, already several possibly competing values, those of the reported adherence to the ideal of consensus democracy as an autocratic value and those of collectivism, commons creations and the use of the political and sociological imagination. However, in theory, the inclusiveness guards against another potential problematic: Freire (1993a: 38) warns that the oppressed must not become the oppressor, but must work with the oppressor to transform relations of power:

it is only the oppressed by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors. The latter, as an oppressive class, can free neither others nor themselves. It is therefore essential that the oppressed wage the struggle to resolve the contradiction in which they are caught; and the contradiction will be resolved by the appearance of the new man [sic]; neither oppressor nor oppressed, but man in the process of liberation.

This seemed, in the early days, to be what was intended, the values underlying the learning process at the GAs seemed, from the outside at least, very much to be collectivist, inclusive and open to everyone. Nevertheless, as the dissent toward the ideal of consensus democracy got greater, the oppression seemed to be turned toward the dissenting Occupiers as was illustrated in the first data extract of this chapter and I shall explore further later. Holloway (2010: 248) points out that "the more we join with others, the greater our creative power". The imagery – hundreds of people sitting on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral listening intently to the messages of hope and the topics for deliberation (livestreams of the GAs in

London St. Paul's camp, 2012) - of this collective learning process of the GAs is illustrated by one Occupier who told me that,

that's how I got involved, because I popped along with my partner on the Saturday [to the GA], and we just kind of stood at the back and the next Saturday I ended up standing up and saying something and then I just kind of volunteered to kind of help put on the general assemblies and stuff, and that's how I got into it

The GAs were quite commonly reported as how people became involved in Occupy, there was a general feeling that the GA, and therefore the movement as a whole, was inclusive enough for them to become active within it. I was told that

sitting there on the steps of St. Paul's felt like there was now a community, a community of people who believed things could be different, who believed we should all be involved in the escape from greed and competition. Who believed that we should do this together, I didn't feel so alone, so desperate

It is possible that without this inclusivity and feeling of common, shared experience, the enclosure of capitalist social relations may well, as Merrifield (2011: 129) suggests, have allowed "the factuality of the 'real world' [to be] afforded too much critical right. One simply lashed out in the prison-house of negativity". Certainly, it seems, these experiences of the GAs and the feeling of what one Occupier called "*communing and collaborating with others*", challenges, if not undoes, this factuality and therefore circumvents the need to 'lash out in the prison-house of negativity'.

These accounts do *suggest* that an attempt to foster alternative social relationships was happening within Occupy in order to prefigure new commons, if not new societies, in what was claimed as public space.

However, this collective gathering in the first months of the Occupation was

fuelled by an elation that “*something really different was happening*”, “*there was something really exciting going on and so many people were getting involved*” and “*it was like being in a fast flowing river, you thought that things could and would really change, that we could make the whole world a better place, there was such a feeling of joy and optimism*”. This reported feeling of a different way of doing, being, creating and feeling was described by some I talked to as “*addictive*”, “*intoxicating*” and “*the most exciting thing I’d ever felt*”. These are strong emotions and although emotions are an important part of the practice of transformative politics (Ollis, 2012; Polletta, 2006), many would argue that there is also a necessity for reason, reflection and a critical outlook on the organisational processes that are creating the ecstatic experience. It is possible that people may miss the nuances and examples of conditioned repressive behaviours when they are experiencing strong emotions, especially, I would argue, the emotion of hope in a collective setting when they have sought that experience from an often reported position of loneliness:

After the financial crash, I lost my job, I almost lost my house and my relationship, it felt like I was totally alone. But going to GAs I realised that there were loads of people affected by what happened and that they wanted to do something about it. It felt so great to be around other people with similar stories all talking about what we could do about it, about different ways to change the situation. I didn’t care that some of the suggestions were a bit out there, it all sounded so good, like we could do anything

I will return to these ideas later in this chapter, however, I think it is pertinent to remember that what Occupy did achieve to some extent, for a few short months, was a commons from that which was private, exposing a rupture in the individualism of private property, which in itself was a different way of organising social relations and was in itself a countervailing discourse. The

subsequent defence of this rupture was a learning curve in itself, as I shall attest to later. The rupture of this factuality of the public/private sphere (in geographical terms) spoke to Freirean pedagogy as in McLaren's (2000: 12) words

a Freirean pedagogy of liberation is totalling without being dominating in that it always attends dialectically to the specific or local 'act of knowing' as a political process that takes place in the larger conflictual arena of capitalist relations of exploitation, an arena where large groups of people palpably and undeniably suffer the needless privations and pain due to alienation and poverty

One of the apparent 'poverties' and alienations about which Occupy's action created a potential 'act of knowing' within the conflictual arena of capitalist relations, was that of the poverty of public space and the alienation of ourselves from potentially insurgent spaces. Thus, to return to the questions posed for this section, possibly changing the view of the individual's place in the world and connecting the self and the social. This forced alienation from those geographical places, where collective happenings and gatherings can be walled off by security guards paid for by private wealth are a reminder of the enclosure of social life and of the lack of potential to enact the right to free assembly and create new insurgent spaces (Hou, 2010). As heard earlier, the closure of the 'public' Paternoster Square, the fortifying of the space with police, private security and metal barriers, was a moment when the real nature of this 'public' space was revealed (Köksal, 2012). As Merrifield (2011: 8) agrees, this fortifying of 'public' space means that "dissent and malcontent henceforth have no agora in which to be heard; the agora is walled off, privatized, managed by some private security company, subcontracted at the behest of some faceless corporation". However, the discussion on public space and the privatisation of the commons is a

discussion to be had in full elsewhere, but it is felt to be pertinent to briefly mention it here as it informs our discussion without taking us into a subject that requires detailed analysis that may derail this exploration. Occupy did, however, also extend beyond the encampment and into virtual spaces, which allowed for the potential extension of the collective experience and collaborative learning practices, however messy this was in reality. I was told that social media was used quite extensively for the primary intention of connecting Occupiers around the world, therefore connecting the self with the social through a collective identity, whether users were physically active in the movement or not as one Occupier explained:

We use Facebook or Twitter, you have to be quite up on all the feeds and know what's going on. When you're sitting at home thinking this is really unfair and I can't believe what's going on, then you can see that in London they're doing something, or in New York they're doing something. I used to watch the GAs at London Stock Exchange, on YouStream or Livestream, I can't remember which one it was and I just kind of found it really inspiring, so I started to email people or on the live talk when the GAs were on saying I'm watching you in [city] keep up the good work, and stuff like that. I've joined a lot of the global occupy, RSS feeds and email and things like that and every now and then I will just like send a message saying, erm, sending best wishes. I come to London regularly now though, because of that.

The connections across the different Occupy sites and groups were important to the people involved, as many Occupiers told me. The feeling and acts of solidarity gave individuals and groups the chance to learn new tactics, new ways of thinking about things, and most importantly to them the feeling that they were not alone, that there were other people attempting to prefigure new cultures around the globe (conversations with Occupiers). The people I conversed with all told me that the national and international movements have been inspired by each other and this notion is well documented in the literature. In addition, the importance of the connections

to other movements, such as the so-called 'Arab Spring', the student occupations against cuts and fees and other uprisings, such as in Greece and now the Ukraine (Byrne, 2012; Chomsky, 2012; Hensby, 2014; Mowbray, 2010; Panayotakis, 2009) was cited as very important and influential. The feeling of solidarity provided by these connections created what was thought of as a collective cultural politics that was being learnt as it unfolded. The reports of this virtual connectedness gives rise to a doubt that popular education can only take place as a politics of personal engagement as Hardt and Negri (2012) suggested earlier. The virtual connectedness seemed to work well as Occupiers, rebels and protesters felt that they had found solidarity and learnt from each other's tactics and triumphs. Stories were shared about how to resist arrest, how to build barricades and how to keep up morale (conversations with Occupiers; Occupy Research Collective workshops, 2013). However, the reported learning from these virtual interactions was specific: knowledge that others were supporting you from around the globe and specific 'training' information on practical matters. Here the 'teachers' were experts, through a lived learning and the students needed their specific expertise, although, no 'learned' pedagogue was required, just the lived knowledge of those in opposition to the repression they experienced as a galvanising mechanism.

It would be wise to remember, however, that the network of people globally were able to share that collective space in a very different way to the people in the camps, it could be argued that there was no real commitment to each other online, other than the odd message of solidarity and support. The camps had their own problems as the people I spoke to readily explained:

Sometimes it feels like we are just surviving here, we can become so inward looking, there is so much to organise, beds, blankets, warm clothes, when we don't get the donations we need, politics goes out the window, we just need to keep going, sometimes, it's easy to forget why we're here

The LSX camp was in occupation throughout a bitterly cold winter, and there were conflicts within the camps:

It's really difficult when you don't agree with people here, you quite often find people shifting alliances, we live so close to each other, even if you don't sleep here, which I don't, it's still hard cos everyone knows everyone else and we all try to get along, but there are always some people you'll never get on with, no one has figured out what to do about that, so we have lost some people.

One of the big deals here is the tension between Occupy and climate camp, climate camp let Occupy use their bank account for the donations and stuff – it was agreed at a GA, but then people from climate camp started to organise us, they thought because they controlled the money they had more power. It soon stopped, but it caused some big arguments between people, some people still don't speak because of it.

This notion of they who control the finances control the camp, is, it seems, in direct opposition to the reported ethos of the camp, that of horizontality and equality. These tensions are difficult to resolve and it seemed from my experience with Occupy, that no one felt that it was their responsibility to try. The learning about new social relationships seemed to be at a disadvantage from having no leaders, or at the least no recognisable form of democratic or perhaps cooperative principles or procedures for the undertaking of action within the camp, as there was no one to stop the action and pick up the tensions and begin a dialogue about them. In addition, the physical conditions were harsh, a few people told me about how they had to use

distraction techniques to get people past the doors of a local community centre to shower:

It's so cold and we're all dirty and smelly...there's a centre down the road where they have free showers, at first, before word got around, they would let a few of us in, but as soon as word got out we had to start making distractions, a couple of us would keep the person on reception busy, asking questions, talking about any old shit, then one person would sneak past, behind us and go into the showers, you can usually get away with it twice a week, it really pisses them off now, but it warms you up to have a shower, you can keep going more. Plus, there aren't that many of us that don't get to go home. Loads of people do sleep here, but most go home once a week or so to warm up, get changed and stuff like that.

All of these problems arose whilst people worked out how to best respond to the crisis that had led them there in the first place, making the learning more difficult in many ways. One occupier told me *"the people in Occupy are trying to make sense of what is happening, it has had to be somewhat inward looking"*. However, as Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 2) insist, "the only place for our utopian hopes and dystopian fears to start out from is where we currently are". These issues speak to the notions of both the power sharing pedagogy of the expert 'teacher' who may be able to negotiate ways to deal with both the inward and the outward contexts, and the non-expert pedagogue who may be able to shed light on some self-learning based on the already existing knowledges of the Occupiers and those with whom they have found solidarity. In both these cases, the shared experiences of the multi-various encampments, protest camps, and uprisings become the pedagogical-political moment, where no external 'power', influence or leadership is required for survival, but may, perhaps, have been welcomed for guidance.

These notions of learning from others doings and enacting that learning themselves could suggest that a form of praxis was being developed by the people involved in Occupy, although not a true Freirean form as this would have included theory and action, rather than just the acquiring of knowledge and implementation of action. However, it seemed, from what they told me, that the Occupiers may have started learning about their place in the world through the solidarity networks, connecting themselves to the wider social milieu through a combination of new and diverse experience and involving themselves in dialogue and debate. An example of this was uncovered as one Occupier, talking about a workshop they had attended, told me “*we were learning about concepts such as white privilege and even though you knew the term, you learnt what it meant to you*”. Another added, on the same issue, “*I guess I evaluate things still in relation to my view of the world but I think that the way, the way I live my life has changed a hell of a lot*”. This further suggests that praxis was being produced, because new theories, as well as learning about action, were being added to the experience of everyday life, through the discourses taking place, the theory was then being converted into actions that were not present before the experience of Occupy’s unique form of educational commons. The diversity of the learning was mentioned time and again, for example it was said that

It has been a hugely educational experience both formally, through initiatives like TCU but also informally in that, the camps have been alive with discourse related to ways to find a more sustainable, just and democratic economic system. People of all backgrounds have been engaging in this discourse. By no means has this been the preserve of the educated few

This notion that the camps were ‘*alive with discourse*’, that they were collectively trying to ‘*make sense of what was happening*’, and most of the

time they were learning skills from each other, '*communing and collaborating with others*', suggests that they were indeed concentrating on the use of free time, as Holloway (2010) suggests is important. The camp occupied that space and attempted to find a formative way to make use of free time in a productive and political way, indeed, one Occupier told me that "*occupy has shown that collective action is good for the human condition*". This was also suggested in this extract from my own reflective fieldwork journal:

an older, scruffy man in a wheelchair enthusiastically attempted to organise my visit for maximum effect. Telling me who was who and where and when I might find them. In that way and in that context, he mattered. He was important, he could influence and assist. He was someone, yet again I was never offered a name or personal signifier. He did however tell me of his struggle with the cold and of the difference it had made when some other unnamed person had found him a hot water bottle. What a comfort it was when battling elitism and corporatocracy out there on the streets of London, sleeping in a tent on the pavement in sub-zero temperatures. I think I would have gone home, but I wasn't entirely sure whether he had a home to go to, I don't think it really matters. Whoever these people are outside of tent city, outside the movement that has brought them together, they are someone whilst they are there: there, they matter a great deal

(Fieldwork journal, 2012).

It seemed that this was the power of the collective experience for many I interacted with: that each individual in the collective struggle was important, and felt it. However, conversely one Occupier told me "*sometimes activists are driven by personal opinions and are reluctant to listen to others. They sometimes have a small knowledge of critical theory, but often manipulate that knowledge to support their own opinions, therefore cliques arise*". I would argue that this issue is probably to be expected in any burgeoning community of committed and passionate people and again points to the possible need for a system of shared principles for democratic or cooperative decision making and mediation. Each person was, as one occupier put it

“self-selected to be here, for their own personal reasons”. There were, of course groups within the groups and despite the insistence on leaderlessness (Occupy London LSX, 2012), an issue which I will pick up on later, there were issues where ‘ownership’ of work became a problematic issue of guilt, rather than of pride or celebration, for example:

here I am TCU [Tent City University] and there's other members of my working group who are doing similar work but feel the same as me, they don't want to start TCU again, but what we have now are people coming at us wanting to reinstate TCU, and interestingly, because sometimes you don't know how you feel about something until you're faced with the choice, interestingly we've all sort of made that decision that we don't need to do that. So there's loads of people who really enjoyed TCU while it was in full swing, and would like to reinstitute it and join the working group and the few of us that are left are really reluctant to let that happen and that's really interesting to me because that's the very thing that we argued against in the beginning was that ownership, yeah? So I've sort of fallen foul of my own, mmm.....

The notion of ownership, especially in this context, is problematic. The ‘ownership’ that is described here, wherein those who worked to establish TCU in the first place felt an affection for and a responsibility to the project, could be read as an acceptable form of ownership in this context, as it is not monetary or exclusive, it cannot be exchanged for any sort of profit.

However, this notion of ownership could restrict others from taking on that project and carrying it forward, therefore the endeavour stops being held in common. Although these are two different notions of *ownership*, one notion cannot help but feel like the other as this Occupier explained. Nonetheless, as Holloway (2010: 256) says, “knowing is a process constructed collectively, a dialogue rather than a monologue, an asking-we-walk: not necessarily polite, at times a provocation, but a provocation that opens, not one that lays down the law”, the idea that the Occupier could have fallen foul of her own....what? Conditioned behaviour, maybe? I would argue that this

knowledge of 'ownership', remains here a provocation, the perhaps painful exposure of what could be a conditioned, culturally constructed notion, in the sense that no one else can access the (re)production, or an emotional bond to an achievement that creates a reluctance to see it changed by new 'owners'? As these issues arise, one might acknowledge this advice from Shor (1996: 122) that "democratic culture, is, by definition, vibrant and dynamic, discomforting and unpredictable. It gives rise to apprehension; freedom is not always calming". This perhaps needed to be more personally recognised within Occupy, as with more embodied and internalised understandings of democratic and cooperative principles of organisation, perhaps this painful exposure could have been seen more as exposing of the vibrant and dynamic, discomforting and unpredictable feeling that comes with what Shor calls the apprehension when one realises that freedom is not always calming. Learning, within the context of Occupy, included, it seems, not only finding out what could be done by doing, but how we might feel about it by feeling.

This issue could well be seen as part of the learning process of building these new social relations, bearing in mind the assertion that this is an internal process, within ourselves, as well as an external one. The specific TCU problem is more complex than it may at first appear however and will be returned to later.

6.3 Did the process of learning produce hope for change?

In the following section I will concentrate on questions regarding hope, the literature indicated that the following issues needed to be attended to in order

to understand if the pedagogy produced hope for change: the questions posed in this section, then, concern the promotion of critical awareness and the raising of consciousness; interrupting capitalist patterns of social relations and nurturing the side of us not controlled by capitalism. The section asks whether Occupy's organic pedagogy produced a language of possibility going beyond critique. Moreover, whether it used trust as a centrally organising principle, which has been discussed as a revolutionary edict.

CE: does it still feel like a kind of exciting movement?

Occupier: erm, definitely because, I think that's because of, as I was saying earlier, the idea that it's not about an idea, well it is about an idea, but the idea is, I don't know, what would the word be, well, the way I like to put it is that it's not about people going, well here's what we think, you should think it too, it's about people thinking and finding out together, which, I mean we were saying something about life being learning, and here like yeah, when you look at the human brain if you kind of strip it down and put to one side the whole instinct side of things it's kind of like an algorithm, isn't it, take in information, change what you think, take in information, change what you think and this is kind of a razor sharp way of loads of people doing that together

we have awakened and not just to complain, we aim to pinpoint the true causes of the crisis and to propose alternatives

As discussed in the previous section, the connections between people who would not usually meet were reported as essential aspects for deep learning to take place, reiterated and extended here by one Occupier is that notion:

I have learnt a lot more about how the system works and why it works, just through talking to people, and like talking to homeless people that have come to GAs, finding out their situation and thinking, this person needs help, you know, I mean you need to be open to help, don't you before someone can help, but yeah, I've come in to contact with a whole other world out there and a new kind of experience from being

out there and different people, just different people and different backgrounds

The connections and interaction between people from different backgrounds not only had the potential to teach them about each other, but also to elicit a deeper educative experience of 'how the system works and why it works', this was because the Occupiers had begun using various political and critical theories to deconstruct the social and political systems that they found themselves in. People who had very little formal education in matters of political economy were reading and critiquing the system through Marx, Kropotkin, Chomsky, Harvey and many others. The interaction and personal connections with what the last Occupier called 'different people and different backgrounds' was allowing other epistemologies to enter their knowledges and utilising critical theories to understand, as stated, 'how the system works and why it works'. Occupy seemed indeed, from my experience, like another world, existing within the norms and everyday world of the City of London:

the physical and virtual spaces broke the ordinary and disquieted the mind. Groups of people sat in the freezing cold, discussing their imagined futures, arguing about the way things could and should change. The steps of the Cathedral often over spilled with individuals from all walks of life, all there to change the future, all there to make the decisions themselves, instead of leaving them to the elite classes. Direct, participatory democracy was seen to be played out here, every one mattered, every voice potentially had equal weight. Despite the cold, despite the effort, there was a freeform of noise: drums; voices; music; pots and pans; and lively debate. All in mixed with the hubbub of the business as usual taking place all around.

(Fieldwork Journal, 2012)

The Occupiers statement above, suggests that these connections between people were thought about not only in terms of their humanity, but also in terms of the wider context, indicating what Freire (1993a) calls an

epistemological curiosity. This type of curiosity: a curiosity that goes beyond what he terms ingenuous curiosity, to one that wishes and seeks to know more, to connect the self to the systems, was illustrated particularly by one Occupiers many Freedom of Information requests on a whole host of topics; by the lively debate and well used library; and by the plethora of independent media (see for example Occupy London's web site that advertises many of these feeds) that was set up by various Occupy actions around the world with a great deal of traffic on the sites daily. It could be argued that the development of an epistemological curiosity is an essential component of any revolutionary education project if the multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2004) are to escape what Freire (1993a) calls the sloganisation of the people. That is the manipulation through slogans and propaganda, epistemological curiosity defies this because individuals have genuine curiosity to find out for themselves, therefore raising their own awareness of the issues that affect their lives and the lives of others and thus promoting and utilising a critical consciousness. This critical consciousness, acting upon the life world, has the potential to interrupt patterns of capitalist social relations and nurture the side of us that is not controlled by capitalism (Holloway, 2010), that is if the individual conscientised person does not feel isolated and alone. However, Freire insists that:

human curiosity as a phenomenon present to all vital experience, is in a permanent process of social and historical construction. It is precisely because ingenuous curiosity does not automatically become critical that one of the tasks of progressive educational praxis is the promotion of a curiosity that is critical, bold and adventurous

(1993a: 38)

Freire, then, acknowledges the importance of these connections and their knowledge production capabilities - their ability to transcend the mere potential of the critical conscience - beyond the critical educator as he insists that “knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the relentless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other” (Freire, 1993a: 53).

Sometimes the impatient, hopeful inquiry seemed to be ongoing *during* the conversations I had with Occupiers:

[Occupy] put me into contact with lots of different people that think different things and by talking to people that think different things you kind of go you know, ‘hmmm, actually what do I think about that and has that changed how I, sometimes it hasn’t because I’ve always thought, I’ve always felt, I’ve never been a revolutionary, I never thought that we could overthrow the government I always thought work within the system to change it so I don’t think there’s going to be a revolution, but now working with occupy its small steps, chip away at it, chip away at it and I’m quite amazed how quickly things have been put on the agenda, you know?

This extract shows the usefulness of reflection and the potential of the mutually useful conversations with researchers for reflection and consolidation of the ‘interviewees’ thoughts as it details the thought process of this Occupier. Thinking through how things might change or be changed and how the potential of their own subjectivity being in process through their interaction with Occupy could be argued to be an important aspect of the Occupy process of solidarity and becoming. The notion of ‘small steps’ expressed here is also reminiscent of the theory from Holloway’s (2010) crack capitalism thesis and of the bricolage notion of knowledge in process, temporal and context bound. The person talking now however, goes on to critically assess the effect that Occupy’s actions had had more broadly:

but then there's other things that like the government are getting wise to like no camping allowed in any area of the Olympic site they've rushed some laws through that you're not allowed to put a tent within you know so there's things like that, that are kind of the government fighting back you know....

This reflection and connection shows the beginnings of a pattern of critical thinking and critical awareness, a potential development of the epistemological curiosity, the personal experiences and the wider effects are recognised as being a continuum of the struggle. Castells (2012: 5) argues that “the fundamental power struggle is the battle for the construction of meaning in the minds of people”, I tend to agree, especially from a pedagogical point of view. Critical thinking, epistemological curiosity and finally conscientization (Freire, 1993a, 1998) has the potential to ensure this power struggle is not easy, if at all possible, for any current dominant ideology to win, or a new totalising one be instigated. That is, when, as Davis (2011: 49) says, “Tina (there is no alternative) was paraded in public whenever possible. So was her good friend Waitt (we're all in this together) and her fairy godmother BS (big society)”, these slogans of dominance and subjugation should no longer be accepted at face value by the critically thinking person and therefore lose their grip. The way the pedagogy was practiced within Occupy seemed to indicate a realisation of this notion. However, authors such as Crouch (2011) have argued that neoliberalism has ‘shrugged off’ the challenges of the financial crash and the associated protests, uprisings and occupations. Does this mean then that there is something missing from the emergent theory? I would argue that although there is not anything missing, *per se*, the numbers needed to be conscientised in order to bring about any fundamental change may often be

underestimated. Ensuring a critical mass, a counter-hegemonic block may be key to fundamental change.

This notion of critical mass, then, begins to make the pedagogical nature, the symbolism of TCU, the emphasis on teach outs, workshops and debates with 'experts', look like a genuine and purposeful strategy, the more public the pedagogy, the more individuals you reach and the more likely you may be to create that critical mass from the Multitude that ensures a large enough counter-hegemonic block creating loud enough countervailing discourses. However, this is not indicated in the conversations as strongly as one might expect, as shall be seen as the discussion progresses. However, the beginnings of a critical awareness - at least among the participants and possibly some of the individuals who followed and supported Occupy - that does, indeed, have the potential to interrupt the social relations synthesised by capitalism and encourage the critical faculties not controlled by capitalism, in order to attempt to understand our reproduction of the system, can be seen emerging from the conversations with those involved.

As another Occupier said about TCU in particular, "*the TCU framework seems to be one that allows people to increase their knowledge and awareness of issues connected to economic justice*". TCU however, seemed to go much further than learning about the subject of economic justice as this extract from one conversation shows:

CE: one of the things that [a university Professor] said was that he came down to do a workshop at TCU, he said, 'I got there and what I thought I was there to do was to talk about my ideas' and he said 'it was about two minutes in when I realised that that is not what I was there to do'...

Occupier: and that's exactly what happened every time it was wonderful

CE: yeah, and he said it was actually so much better than anything he had envisaged, he's a good person, but I can imagine some people being quite shocked by that different form of social relations especially when you're an eminent professor

Occupier: yeah, but you know, even John Snow came in and sat down one day, from ITV and it was great, he ended up being in a big debate with somebody from Hackney who was worried about his social housing, and John came in to say something and didn't say it at all and in the end he [John Snow] thanked us profusely and said that that was probably the most amazing afternoon he'd ever had.

CE: so was that your experience of people who came in thinking they were experts and.....

Occupier: over and over again

CE: that they were actually grateful that....

Occupier: over and over again

Holloway (2010: 39) says, "if our struggle is not asymmetrical to capitalism in its forms, then it simply reproduces capitalist social relations, whatever its content". A real and practical insistence on the subversion of how we normally treat the 'expert' can be seen as quite asymmetrical to normative capitalist relations and has the possibility of creating a public usefulness of the expertise of one for others, but possibly goes further than mere public intellectualism. The notion that TCU were thanked by the visiting 'expert' so many times, and that this way of doing things – attempting to connect people in an equitable and unpretentious way - was appreciated by those usually held in high social esteem, indicates that relations were being subverted, because even those that interacted with Occupy on an ad hoc basis such as those described, seemed to enjoy nurturing that side of them not controlled by capitalism and its hierarchical constructs. This also put in mind the democratic power-sharing critical pedagogy advocated by Shor (1996) with a touch of Rancière's (1991) Ignorant Schoolmaster, in that the power sharing was instigated by the 'students' or those to whom the 'expert' had come to

speak, but the 'expert' sometimes ended up debating and discussing issues they were not 'expert' in. This type of interaction may have had the effect of producing debating skills and critical thinking, rather than any concrete learning of the experts' discipline. As Rancière insisted however, it does not matter what the student learnt in universal teaching, if they learnt anything at all.

One of the problematic elements of Occupy for many activists and other politically engaged persons was that it had no set political position (conversations with Occupiers). Again, this political positioning, of choosing one political ideology over another, could be argued to be a trapping of the oppositional politics of late capitalist realism (Fisher, 2009). The lack of ideological restrictions was one of the elements that made Occupy so interesting and enigmatic to many: *"no one knew what Occupy was, Occupy or the political elites, this made occupiers free and the elites fearful, everyone was learning!"* Whether 'fearful' is what the elites actually felt has always been very much up for debate, as I shall touch upon throughout. However, this ties in to what Marx (1844/1975: 276-7) said, although referring to estranged labour, concerning the very humanity of human beings: "free, conscious activity is man's [sic] species character". He goes onto argue that estranged labour estranges the person from his 'species character'. He argues that it takes away "his real objectivity as a member of the species, and transforms his advantage over the animals into the disadvantage that his organic body, nature, is taken away from him". This echoes in some respects what Holloway (2010: 113) insisted earlier, "identification or reification is an enormously destructive force in everyday struggle. We give our protests a name, a label, a limit". It could be argued

that this also applies, surely to an individual's own ideology. If the notion of prefiguration and critical, utopian¹⁵ thinking is abandoned, for the relative safety of a set ideological standpoint (e.g. socialism, communism, etc), then a limit is set, identifying with a blueprint and therefore creating from the 'creating of a new society' a form of abstract labour because action is merely adhering to a directional path toward a set future:

Moreover, the co-operation of wage-labourers [activists] is entirely brought about by the capital [set political ideology] that employs them. Their unification into one single productive body [a social movement], and the establishment of a connection between their individual functions, lies outside their competence. These things are not their own act, but the act of the capital [the formulation of the set ideology] that brings them together and maintains them in that situation. Hence the interconnection between their various labours confronts them, in the realm of ideas, as a plan drawn up by the capitalist [political and revolutionary theorists], and, in practice, as his authority, as the powerful will of a being outside them, who subjects their activity to his purpose.

(Marx, 1867/1990: 449-50)

Holloway (2010: 4) insists that people should "dedicate ourselves to what we consider necessary or desirable. Either way, we live the world we want to create". This is what was seen, on the surface at least, within the Tent City at St. Paul's. However, the depths of this world Occupiers desired, created within Tent City, will be explored in due course.

There is the temptation to over romanticise this open and free prefiguration. As both Holloway (2010) and Freire (1993a) caution, albeit in different ways, there are no pure human beings. Recalling Holloway's character masks (discussed in Chapter Five), add to this Freire's insistence that the

¹⁵ Utopian here is conceived in the same way as in Leonardo (2006) as "subversive to the status quo because it represents a form of discontent, usually levelled against the dominant or rising class" (p.87), "utopia is characterised by dynamism and inertia" (p. 88)

oppressed house the oppressor within them, one begins to wonder whether the freedom and openness could be a surface façade that does not run as deep as one might think on initial contact:

we had a meeting the other week where one person was basically suggesting this whole new utopian society where he didn't even use money, he said he lived without money for a year, and I was just thinking that bares no relation to my life, and my friends, and my responsibilities, my mortgage and my insurance and my having to have a job and you know. It was so way out there and I think part of the problem with Occupy is it's so different that people can't relate to it, part of the message is to do with their lives and I think part of that too is that we've never had a statement of who we are and what we stand for cos all political movements say this is who we are, this is what we stand for, this is what we're against, this is what we're for, and we've still not really got that together and it has been a big criticism. Nobody really knows what Occupy stands for and what it is, but in this discussion I started off thinking this guy's too far, you're too utopian, too far away from anything that makes any sense to the people that I hang out with, but then I started to think well ok can we not see that as the ultimate goal of a fairer world? So he is over there and that's fine we need to move towards there, but within our structure and within our society you know?

'Within our structure and within our society'? Surely, that is what Occupy claimed to be opposed to, the 'new social relations' they thought they were producing were outside those structures: a social world differently organised. I want to share quite a long extract of conversation to illustrate this point. The extract needs to be reproduced in full in order to be properly understood and done justice to. It came about during a very long conversation and only once a great deal of trust had been established, so I have cleaned it up a little so as to remove identifiable speech cadence in an attempt to anonymise it:

CE: there have been some quite savage critiques of Occupy on a gender basis, I haven't read many of them yet but I know they are there.

Occupier: well, there's more, some very serious stuff - (Long pause in which it became obvious she was not going to elaborate)

CE: yeah? SoI mean.....in that respect, the social relations within the space of Occupy were reproducing some of the relations outside?

Occupier: I wouldn't say exactly no... yes and no,

CE: or perhaps not effectively breaking them down, is that it?

Occupier: they weren't effectively, no, they were different and they were better, but it's hard not to confuse two different things here because the big camp and the big GAs, yes, I would say you're right, that is reproducing a pretty close model to all that might be wrong gender-wise, but in the smaller situations, there was a really funny dynamic going on there. There are many women still involved in Occupy, some very strong voiced women, and so appearances are one thing but its, I just think the particular place that I've found myself in, [...] I have been deeply, deeply involved insorry I hesitate because there's paranoia all around us....[pause].....anyway I just found myself in a situation where the area or the level I was working I really was the female in the room,[.....] I've got a voice and I've got respect, but despite the fact that I can do tactical planning and strategic, and I do all those things, [however] I'm the one in the kitchen washing all their filthy dishes because they won't do it. And then they make all these gender jokes, like 'oh the little woman's in the kitchen' and they think they're hilarious ...[she told me the men in the group had also given her a male nickname] So those strong women that you see at the face of it, they come forward and they're doing the interviews and all that stuff, but actually in that nitty gritty bit where its hard and you have to sleep rough, they're not doing that, [.....however] the women that will come into those spaces, are probably what I would say the most vulnerable, who shouldn't possibly be there, and so I'd say there are some real gender issues and I will say that there is some abuse of those people, which makes me sick.

There are several things at play here, one is the obvious gender issues that were experienced which ranged from sexist jokes to more serious issues such as sexual abuse¹⁶ and the other is the mention of paranoia. Both these were serious issues in Occupy and need, and have received, further discussion elsewhere (for example see Anonymous, 2012; Bella, 2011; Ng & Toupin, 2013). Although this work is not going to go into detail about the

¹⁶ One person involved in Occupy and the hacktivist group Anonymous was, several months after the camp was evicted, charged on two counts of the rape of a woman in the Occupy camp during the encampment. Ward, V. (2013) 'Protester 'Raped by Anonymous Activist' at Occupy London Camp, Court Hears.' The Telegraph. However, he was later cleared and the charges dropped: Mann, S. (2013) 'Occupy Protester Found Not Guilty of St. Paul's Cathedral Tent Rape.' London 24

issues relating to gender¹⁷, they are extremely pertinent to the overall issue of creating alternate social relations from those normalised by capitalist relations and indeed learning about how we implement and sustain popular education initiatives. Therefore, I will come back to this issue later.

The issue of paranoia was difficult to avoid as one Occupier told me:

“paranoia is awful, just the other day someone I didn’t know phoned me to say the guy I was seeing is an undercover cop, I had to end the relationship just in case it was true”. This paranoia was heightened by the recent press concerning the behaviour of the police force’s undercover officers at various other protests, most famously their infiltration of environmental movements, resulting in the quashing of the convictions of the Drax power plant protesters¹⁸. This presence of paranoia on the one hand made it difficult for trust to be used as a central organising principle, and on the other may have made it very difficult for outsiders to understand what was going on in the movement:

Occupier: I was told not to come today

CE: how come?

Occupier: some people reckon that most of the people who want to talk to us are undercover cops, trying to find ways to prosecute us

CE: oh, right, but I’ve written to you from a university address, so you know I am who I say I am

¹⁷ I decided that I would not look specifically at gender as it has been written about elsewhere and would go beyond the questions asked in this work: for more information on these issues see for example Bahati Kuumba, 2001; Weldon, 2012; and West & Blumberg, 1990, among others.

¹⁸ See for example <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/jan/10/mark-kennedy-undercover-cop-activist> the now infamous story of the undercover police officer who infiltrated the Drax power plant protests, or <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/8262746/Mark-Kennedy-15-other-undercover-police-infiltrated-green-movement.html> a story which reports that ‘sexual entanglements’ were common place between undercover police officers and unsuspecting female protesters in the environmental movement, and this article by George Monbiot: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/03/undercover-officer-major-riot-john-jordan> looking at how long this behaviour had been going on for and how serious it had become.

Occupier: well, there are some who think that the police are setting up .ac.uk addresses, so we think they're researchers, I'm not so sure.....I told them I'd met you before, somewhere else [mentions the conference where we met] but they reckoned that the police are going to those kinds of lengths

CE: that's why I'm finding it so hard to get people to talk to me.....

Occupier: yeah, I said to a couple of people that I knew you, but they still said no, just in case and told me I shouldn't come either.

The case of the induced paranoia, wherever it originated, is a serious one for any movement attempting to change social relations and create a more just and equitable society which would have to be based on trust. I would argue that paranoia, which was understandable especially in light of the Drax protesters mentioned above and the exposés of multi-national surveillance - such as the issues made public by Edward Snowden, a former NSA employee, now (at the time of writing) seeking asylum in Russia from the US Government - became one of the most instrumental reasons for the failure of Occupy, as a new type of social movement, to create any visible change.

Although the changes may not have been globally visible, they were experienced by some Occupiers as quite fundamental, because as this occupier says, *"I think everybody has their own unique experience, but I think it would be impossible, for only, you know, closed off from the world people, to not take something from the experience of being here..."*. Another Occupier offers this opinion on the issue:

I think that the whole of society has become so protective of what it's got, so that's the same as you put a big wall up around your house to protect you from your neighbours and you have a burglar alarm and you don't share anything [...] everybody is just looking after themselves or their industry or their workplace and I think we have got used to living like that, some people might always want to live like that, I've always thought that that was a bit wrong anyway but I must admit that when I worked in [former career], I wouldn't speak up about

my political views because I would lose my job, I had to protect myself, whereas now, I'm not sure whether it's because I'm a bit older or I'm not in that industry anymore but I'm going to be a bit more me now and I'm not going to protect myself and I'm loving sharing and realising that you can share your views or share a cup of tea or whatever, actually you get a lot more back, yeah, you get a lot more back, your part of a community rather than just buying stuff

Here again the issue of paranoia is prevalent with the mention of walls, alarms and people just 'looking after themselves'. However, I think that this was one of the triumphs of Occupy, that the people involved were able to reflect not only on their own lives but on the conditions of life that they felt instituted the relations between people constituted by mistrust and fear of Others, the raising of awareness of these issues may have changed this view: the occupation of their previous lives with big walls built around them became the past and the reappropriation of themselves and their relationships to wider society, a new beginning. This created for some a language of possibility that often did go beyond critique, a new experience for many:

Whenever I've been involved in politics before, it's just been a load of people sat round, shouting each other down about what is the most important thing that's wrong in the world, nobody ever seemed to have any suggestions about what to do about it. Just a whinge fest really, that's why I thought I didn't like politics

Is there a moment then, when the politics of critique ceases to be useful and a new politics of possibility emerges? This notion expressed by the Occupier is reminiscent of Merrifield 'prison house of negativity' that was discussed earlier. Perhaps, then, finding the language of possibility constitutes the political moment (Ranci re, 2010) for some, when the oppressive conditions of everyday life cease to be inevitable: there is an alternative. One occupier,

who had already told me that they had been involved in politics before at varying levels, said *“Occupy is the first time that I came to self-identify as an activist”*. I asked why and they answered *“I don’t know, I suppose it’s because Occupy looks forward and tries to build the future rather than just complaining about what’s wrong, we do that too, but it’s not the focus”*. This does indeed seem to illustrate that Occupy was moving, or at least had the potential to move beyond critique and into the formation of a language of possibility, as Freire (1993a; 1998) suggests is essential to the enacting of transformative politics. Moving toward this language of possibility and, in fact, enacting this new lexicon, should indeed interrupt capitalist social relations and nurture that other side of people not controlled by capitalism, as Holloway (2010: 171) explained it might.

you come into this and expectations and hope is very high, you come into that environment as an individual and you do begin forming social relationships and working relationships, and through those you, yeah, you sort of learn how to channel that hope and it’s very empowering in the beginning because all of a sudden you find yourself, in a group of people who didn’t necessarily agree on how to do it but agreed basically on, you know, on political aims and thoughts with which I identified. So that was a magical time, you know, anything was possible, you could move mountains and you knew it, and erm, and we felt we did particularly well. And you know for me, the experience is also intrinsically linked to what we had during the camp and sort of how these social relationships, due to having actual space, unfold without that space, and you know what new spaces are created, and how the social relationships and learning occur around those new contexts?

This account was recorded after the eviction of the LSX camp and shows that the learning that had taken place within the space created by the camp was quite fundamental, at least to this individual Occupier, and the reflection the statement contains regarding how the new relationships were growing and changing indicates an increased awareness of how relationships work in

the context of utility and focus. I asked one occupier “do you think that you have been changed as a person through your involvement with Occupy?” and the response was

definitely, definitely, I've sort of been open to other views, I've become open to other people's views and other ways of doing things and I've got a bit more confident that actually that's alright to do that. Yeah I've definitely.....I'm just a bit more.....I don't know how to describe it, erm...I think more about community now I guess, and I think more about other people, I think more, it doesn't matter so much about money, it doesn't matter so much about stuff and are we, you know you can meet some people at this organisation, you know, at this meeting and actually they're really supportive and they don't know you. It's all based on actions and everybody's really welcoming, you know, and it's like there are other people out there that might share my point of view and my background

This reflects the research carried out by Ollis (2012: 218), she says that her research has “demonstrated that learning is a process of identity change. Identity change was a common element across both groups of activists [she studied]; they were changed in some way because of their learning”. In addition, the idea that there are other people that might share their views, gives rise to the notion that many people involved in Occupy might have a heightened awareness of potential solidarity relations, or as discussed earlier, more sensitivity to finding other groups and individuals making ‘cracks’ in capitalism (Holloway, 2010).

As Griffiths (2003: 63) insists, “valuing oneself and others is central to recognising, getting and struggling for justice” and this value for others, their opinions and one’s own opinions is illustrated strongly in many of the conversations I had:

I think it's raised issues, and its provided a voice for things that says 'this is wrong', I don't think it's only Occupy that's done it, actually in the UK, UK Uncut have done it, as well, erm, because it's put certain

things on the agenda, actually really quickly, amazingly quickly. Like the whole tax thing, but that started with UK Uncut, how quickly that became part of the agenda and became part of the national consciousness - even the daily mail are talking about it now – that they see it as wrong is amazing

This thought about other individuals, other groups and the way things could be and who makes it that way was readily evident in my Occupy conversations and seems to constitute at least the beginnings of a countervailing discourse to the normative one of individualism and competition. Let me share another extract from my own journal after visiting the 'Tech Tent' and talking to a group of people inside:

He [one of the occupiers] explained things to me as if they would be revelations, things that I had educated myself about long since. Lots of them did that a bit. It was as if they had thought so many new thoughts there, in that camp, that they couldn't believe they were saying anything that had been thought before. They were exploring and discovering things that they found exciting and extraordinary. They were learning about themselves as learners, listeners. Midwifing themselves and each other from states of ingenuous curiosity into states where their curiosity had become genuine and epistemological, where the act of 'knowing' no longer seemed to be good enough, they needed to understand and then that understanding needed to be shared, to be given freely to others who could then experience this critical birthing process as they had. They were eager to create new ways of thinking, of doing and of being in anyone who came across them with an open ear. They had discovered a new way of constituting society, without the involvement of wider society, but there was no hesitation that what had to be done next was to extend their new knowledge to wider society. These people, some with low levels of education, some with high, all thinking alike in a way that anyone can think – curiously and with a desire for the passion of learning and self-improvement. I believe that there in the freezing temperatures outside St. Paul's cathedral an intellectual public is being created

(Fieldwork journal, 2012)

Sharing this extract reminds me how infectious hope becomes and how Merrifield's 'prison house of negativity', that was touched upon earlier was manifestly absent at that time, despite this visit being only several days

before their first eviction hearing. The concentration on what could be done, the possibilities of a new world, a new way of being, set the camp ablaze with positive possibility. This seemed obviously important for them, as Holloway elucidates:

building a new world does of course mean changing the existing one, but the shift in emphasis is crucial: instead of focussing our attention on the destruction of capitalism, we concentrate on building something else. This is an inversion of the traditional revolutionary perspective that puts the destruction of capitalism first and the construction of the new society second

(Holloway, 2010: 50)

Katsiaficas (2006: 187) discusses that this exploration of new worlds through both prefiguration and a theoretical language of possibility can also be explained by “the absence of any central organisation (or even primary organisations)”. According to Katsiaficas this is because this absence “helps keep theory and practice in continual interplay”. The argument continues that “the sheer volume of decentralised happenings generated by small groups acting on their own initiative prohibits systematic understanding of the totality of the movement, a first step in the dismantling of any system”, a hint of the anarchist principles that seemed almost incidental in the camp. This prohibition of systematic understanding seems to have been part of the goal of Occupy, creating a specific kind of revolutionary potential that very few other movements have been able to create, if indeed, Katsiaficas is correct that this is a ‘first step in the dismantling of any system’. However, as one occupier told me,

one of the dangers of pure academic, theoretical, academic thought is not putting things into practice, and pressing, and seeing what happens. [...] Here, you can't gloss over things, the things that you gloss over become apparent, you have to face them and you kind of

realise that for example with the direct democracy thing, you see what the challenges are and you see what there is about it that on paper it looks great but in practice might need a bit more nuance to it

Glossing over the obvious criticism of academic practice, it also seems that the critique might have extended to their own practices of such things as direct democracy, or consensus decision making.

The critique of their own practices, however, was problematic as briefly discussed earlier. As was seen from the ethical guidelines in Chapter Four that were drawn up by the Occupy Research Collective (ORC), there is an indication that the movement were, at the very least, reticent about criticism of them, which seemed to include critiques of their own practices, by their own activists. As this conversation extract shows:

CE: I did an interview in the tent at TCU and one of the things that was said in that interview was that they weren't sure that consensus decision making was working or could work

Occupier: and that's a very brave thing for somebody to say, especially at that point, because that's been a real bone of contention to this day that, if you say, I don't think consensus decision making is working for us – oh my god! Shit would fly!

In light of this one has to ask, despite the apparent nurturing of collective experience, despite the reported solidaristic connections between people and the important work of nurturing the side of people not controlled by capitalism, trust may well not have been *the*, or indeed *an*, organising principle, as Holloway (2010) says it must for real revolutionary potential to emerge. There is, however, the usual mixed message on this issue, as one Occupier told me that “*networks of trust were very important*”. I would argue that this mixed message is to be expected due to the complexity of what was being attempted and the notion described earlier that everyone had his or

her own unique, individual experience of the movement in addition to the decentralised happenings that Katsiaficas says should begin to dismantle totalising systems. In addition, Castells (2012: 6) states, “each individual human mind constructs its own meaning by interpreting the communicated materials on its own terms, this mental processing is conditioned by the communication environment”. In other words, the experience of ‘trust’ may well be different depending on what working group you were in, or how fully you were involved in the movement and which camp you participated in among many other aspects and experiences. Pertinent to the purpose of this work, however, Castells goes on to say, “the transformation of the communication environment directly affects the forms of meaning construction, and therefore the production of power relations”. This notion, coupled with the concrete examples of how different communication environments were variously experienced, challenges the understanding of the potential differences between Rancière’s Universal Teaching and Shor’s democratic power sharing (both discussed in Chapter Five). This is potentially because if ‘the transformation of the communication environment directly affects the forms of meaning construction, and therefore the production of power relations’, then the necessarily different styles of pedagogy in these two philosophies will have a fundamental effect on power relations and meaning construction. Of Occupy, it is said, “*the camps allowed people to speak, they nurtured individual agency through a culture of sharing. They became beacons for discussion*”, which talks to the notion of universal teaching, that everyone was learning without explication, but with each other, the inception of the movement having been the ‘teacher’ that prompted them to learn, however, did that free ranging educative activity

leave them satisfied and fundamentally transformed? One occupier told me, a while after all the encampments had gone that *“I’m so frustrated with Occupy London as they are because all that hope and all that wonderfulness at the beginning, it’s not beaten out of me, I just don’t know where the shit to put it. I’m walking around and the engine’s revving but there’s no road”*. One example of where there was that ‘road’ and a definite learning trajectory was enabled was the eviction hearings. Dan Ashman who became Occupy’s ‘Litigant in Person’ at their eviction hearings had this to say about his experience:

it did not matter that I had never stepped inside a courtroom in my life. I received a lot of earache from those who feared for my future security and many people offered their support, for which I am grateful beyond words. Building and presenting my case was a true communal effort that forged new relationships.... A relative stranger offered to help me and I thought ‘why not?’ and things started to fall into place

(Ashman, 2012)

In this particular example, the collective learning and peer support illustrates the trust that Occupy had in its members, at one point at least. If one reads the whole article by Ashman, one can understand the complex endeavour he had taken on and that he experienced a steep learning curve that was only possible because others had put their trust in him and he trusted others to come to his aid when necessary. In fact, the night before the hearing a group of Cambridge University Law students turned up at the camp to assist in whatever way they could and prepare him for the hearing, thus utilising the power sharing of the ‘expert’ pedagogues.

There are many examples, which I was told about of how trust was at least a *guiding* principle, if not an organising one and it is argued once again here

that to create countervailing discourses, trust has to be apparent, otherwise voices become silenced. However, I want to end this section with this conversation extract, which by now will probably come as no surprise:

Occupier: we have failed to provide safe space on every front. That's where we've failed and without it the people have left because they couldn't tolerate a situation that wasn't going successfully make the change,

CE: that's interesting so it was the failure of the safe space that....

Occupier: that was my last straw, you know because other people say it was other reasons and I've just got this thing, I've read so many things over the last year that say that Occupy is dead and ok, sure, but for me it wasn't dead until it was really dead, I mean it is stagnating dead, it's just sitting there in its own water that its already peed in, you know, that's when its dead - (both laugh)

6.4 Did the education allow people to see the conditions of oppression which were disguised as social realities?

In this section, the conditions indicated by the review of literature regarding whether individuals were able to uncover political fictions disguised as social realities in order to develop genuine discourse will be addressed. These cover issues such as whether the education practiced perceived the dehumanising power that education and indeed wider society can have? Whether Occupy were actually more 'creating a community of saints' (Holloway, 2010) or whether they were really establishing some different forms of social relations. In addition, the issues of whether the Occupiers dealt with cultural invasion (Freire, 1993a) by preventing the crowding out of people's lives and seeing the people as intelligent and agentic beings. Did they develop and build the sensitivity and critical awareness that might allow

them to see other potential cracks, to work in solidarity but not to culturally invade.

One of these political fictions, discussed in the last section, the 'acceptable' or what might even be called 'affectionate' sexism, only seemed to be uncovered by those oppressed by these actions and then not as an issue to be discussed, but as a complaint after the fact, even though it was clearly perceived and felt by some at the time. Freire (1993a: 154) describes why domination, even if the domination through the use of these types of 'jokes' is recognised by the oppressed, is still a problem:

Domination itself is objectively divisive. It maintains the oppressed I in a position of 'adhesion' to a reality which seems all powerful and overwhelming, and then alienates by presenting mysterious forces which are regarded as responsible for reality about which nothing can be done. The individual is divided between identical past and present, and a future without hope. He or she is a person who does not perceive him/herself as becoming; hence cannot have a future built in unity with others.

Therefore, these 'jokes' had the potential to create a reality within Occupy where the women are, as Freire insists they might be, divided between this past and present and unable to think of themselves as becoming alongside the men in these (re)organised social relations. In the conversations with several of the women from Occupy that I had, this inability to think of themselves as becoming alongside the men was apparent, not as explicit statement, but as a feeling, an attitude toward what had transpired. This is possibly because although the relations are generally different as we heard in the Occupier's testimony, for them when identified as women, rather than productive subjects in the formation of a new way of being, things seem to have changed very little. However, as is often said, recognition is the first

step, and because all social relations should be under the microscope in the context of Occupy, women may be able to tackle this form of sexism and not understand themselves in its terms, as explored earlier:

But as she or he breaks this 'adhesion' and objectifies the reality from which he or she starts to emerge, the person begins to integrate as a Subject (an I) confronting an object (reality). At this moment, sundering the false unity of the divided self, one becomes a true individual

(Freire, 1993a: 154)

The problem with this specific issue, that of 'acceptable/affectionate' sexism, was that no one I spoke to during my conversations, except one Occupier, wanted to acknowledge that it was an issue, despite it being apparent in many interactions that I witnessed or was a part of. If it was mentioned at all (which was rare¹⁹). However, the issue of this form of conscientization was brought up by one occupier who told me that

I think that everybody is conditioned to live like that [within the safety of his or her individualism]. And that's the problem with Occupy, its reaching out to those people, but not in a patronising way, not in a way that's saying you're wrong, but just sort of saying....I don't know how we do it because the whole world's sort of got protectionist of their own little corner of the world haven't they? And just saying there's a better way there's a different way of doing it and community stuff and I think as well, what I've seen happen just from other little things I've been involved in as well, people only get involved when it affects them

The notion here, that people only get involved when it affects them, was an interesting one because Occupy were there initially to protest a banking

¹⁹ It must be remembered that the interactions were conversations with no fixed agenda and therefore it was inappropriate for me to force the conversation onto things that the occupiers did not want to talk about. This can easily be seen as a weakness of the method, which could be overcome by doing a second round of more formal interviews, however, it started to become very difficult to track people down after the eviction and the spring actions as many people had either left the area or been arrested.

crisis and consequent austerity measures that would potentially affect everyone in some way. Perhaps it has to be considered, therefore, that Occupy were not successful in uncovering political fictions and oppressive conditions disguised as social realities, either inside the movement or as an action of public pedagogy. Had these conditioned behaviours, these political fictions, been brought up as 'teaching points', which takes skilled pedagogues to do that sensitively, they may have been able to move beyond the fiction of the perceived 'affectionate sexism' not being felt as misogynistic. However, these shifts in perception can be thought of as an essential stage in developing criticality, and as Brookfield (2001: 17) says, "making the attitudinal shift to reinterpret as culturally induced what were initially held to be personally devised value systems, beliefs, and moral codes can be highly intimidating. To realise that the moral and behavioural codes we regard as our personal creations are, in fact, culturally induced is threatening to our sense of self". This is echoed in these words from an Occupier:

people come along and they say 'I want change', but then you create a fluid rupture in which there's a fluid situation and you find that people are really reluctant to change anything and so you find there is a lot of resistance and a lot of defensiveness to change and we do fight amongst ourselves something awful, and so much of it to me is that I do see individuals who aren't able to trust others and they've got a defensiveness and the walls will not come down, and so within that any change they want to see is very much through a regulatory framework, in that they can only work through the idea if its passed through that. But then, they are so defensive that they actually will personally attack somebody that they feel is not in their class and well there can't be a change if that's how you are. If everything is like this and that's the way it is, well then where is that change going to come from if you're not actually going to allow it to happen? and you're not going to welcome it when it comes at you, [...] because this is what I believe, if you want change you've got to accept fluidity. And your concepts and your theories must be responsive to what you see around you, you need to be able to learn something else

This reluctance to let go of certain ways of doing things was sometimes quite potent in the conversations, I reflected upon the issue in my own fieldwork journal after the Occupy Research Collective (ORC) Convergence:

It seems that the conditioning that the people at the ORC convergence from their previous experience is still prevalent, they haven't shaken it, or, alternatively, they are not ready to replace it. There is still a very 'us and them' attitude to education (i.e. us, the people and them, the educators) although they are starting to come around to the idea that they themselves could practice peer education, but only technical skills. They seemed to feel that one had to be trained to teach anyone. I'm not sure they understand the power of what they are already doing and how it is working.

(Fieldwork journal, 2013)

These two extracts, one from an Occupier heavily involved in TCU and my own notes suggest that not only were they failing to uncover political (and indeed, educational) fictions disguised as social realities, but it seemed that they were also either unable or unwilling to perceive the dehumanising power of education and society at large (Freire, 1993a). This division in the attitudes, behaviours and viewpoints of the Occupiers, all going through roughly the same experience (recall that every conversation started with '*I can't speak for anyone else in Occupy, but....*'), at the same socio-political juncture, challenges the notion in the theory that this form of organic, critical, politically awakening education will allow the conditions of one's own oppression to be unveiled thus enabling a challenge to that oppression. The oppressive conditions of people's own lives did seem to be being unveiled, as the theory suggests it should. However, individuals were apparently not becoming aware of *their part* in the oppression of others. I would argue that this is a political fiction that is often (dis)missed, that if you fight for social

justice, you cannot be a part of the oppressive class²⁰. There is potentially a single issue politics at work here that allows this social reality to go unnoticed. The oppressive conditions of capitalism were unveiling themselves for many of the people I spoke to at such a rate during this highly critically educative experience, but with no one objective enough there to pick up on the conditioned behaviours in Occupy itself that were not seen as oppressive, except by the victims, they apparently went unnoticed. Then what should be done? Can oppression and the formation of counter-oppressive relationships be addressed one oppression at a time by creating what might be thought of as incrementally countervailing discourses? Or does that leave some sections of the newly emerging multitude less realised than others? According to Hardt and Negri (2004, 2012) the multitude can only become a revolutionary subject when diversity is recognised as strength, not, as it seems in the case of Occupy, when it divides people through 'acceptable' subjugation.

The inability to perceive dehumanizing aspects of their practice, did seem to have a split, in my view, between those who had been involved in formal and institutionalised education before the encampment and those who had never initiated group learning before:

The more 'intellectual' the individuals saw themselves as being, the more they wanted to rely on existing mechanisms to understand how things work, the less 'intellectual' they saw themselves as, the more they seemed to have the freedom to imagine what could be and

²⁰ Take for example the recent scandal in the Socialist Workers Party in which they covered up accusations of rape by their senior party members:
<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/mar/09/socialist-workers-party-rape-kangaroo-court>,
<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2014/05/comrades-war-decline-and-fall-socialist-workers-party>,
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2294198/Special-report-Did-Socialist-Workers-Party-cover-NINE-rapes-Kangaroo-court-cleared-official-raping-teenage-member-scandal-goes-far-deeper.html>

interpret what was happening (the reliance on existing theory for those undergoing a university education vs. those who were just activists)

(Fieldwork notes, 2013 - ORC)

This was one of the things, I argue, that separated TCU and the School of Ideas (Sol). TCU seemed to be an activist space for learning, often with others, conversely, some of the Occupiers who had backgrounds in education operated the School of Ideas (initially the Bank of Ideas, based in an old bank building until it was evicted and an old abandoned primary school was occupied), note here the use of the word school. I had wondered why Occupy needed two spaces for education and this split seemed to be the answer. For example, I was told that “*TCU happened almost by accident, it happened because people needed a space to talk to each other, people came to share knowledge about what they thought they knew, TCU created a void in which space could be produced, a vocal and open space*”.

Whereas, “the idea [of the Sol] was for members of the diverse local community to use the space as a community resource, for their own projects. Members of Occupy London had been using the school as a workspace and a place to connect with local residents....the school had the potential to provide an inspirational injection of positivity into the once vibrant but now fragmented community” (Fordham, 2012). This community space was occupied, set up and produced by members of Occupy as *outreach*. They held lecture series’, formal workshops on activism techniques and even worked with local young people to write and record a protest song (conversations with Occupiers; Occupy London LSX, 2011). There definitely seemed to be two ways of thinking about education and pedagogy going on here, two different theories: one explicit, that of Sol, and one implicit, that of

TCU. Both of the projects, TUC and the Sol, used a more open and critical form of education, rather than schooling, which was community based and inclusive of a variety of people, and as Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 140) comment from their experience, “once the criticality is awakened [people] are no longer docile and passive learners. They no longer simply absorb official bodies of knowledge but question and filter course content. In their evolving philosophical and theoretical understandings, based on direct experience with critical pedagogy, the act of reflective practice becomes second nature”. Therefore, both of the projects did use alternative methods of doing and experiencing education to one extent or another. However, the difference lies in the notion, expressed here by Katsiaficas (2006: 4), that “more than anything else, the new radicals are distinguished ... by their orientation to themselves – to a ‘politics of the first person’ – not to the proletariat or to the wretched of the earth”. The experience described to me by the Occupiers of TCU was very much in line with this politics of the first person. They were there to change themselves, to live differently, to prefigure this new society and then to encourage others to join them. Their way of doing and experiencing education seemed to me to reflect this. In the Sol, on the other hand, they set up a dialogue with the local community, and with each other, without the introduction of ‘experts’, such as those invited to converse at TCU. Therefore, a few members of Occupy (only a handful of Occupiers were involved in Sol) controlled the learning in the Sol, or potentially set themselves up as ‘experts’ in the delivery of outreach education. They did, however, manage some impressive outreach activities (considering they were an oppositional social movement), such as going into schools, nevertheless, they were there to fit into the National Curriculum Citizenship

lessons, and teach the children and young people about the importance of democracy and dialogue (email communication with Occupiers from the Sol)-counter-hegemonic schooling, but schooling nonetheless. Burbules (2000: 252) has this to say, “the insistence that dialogue is somehow self-corrective, that if there are unresolved power differentials or unexamined silences and omissions within a dialogue, simply persisting with the same forms of dialogic exchange can bring them to light, seems not only counterproductive but itself a form of hegemony: if dialogue fails, the solution to the problem is more of the same”. Within the confines of a school lesson, this seems to be the only way that dialogue could be used, as a token performance. This persistence with the notion of dialogue as a radical educational practice, for the sake of itself creates a situation that Holloway (2010: 71) explains thus: “we spend our years building an alternative space, then realise that it is not so alternative, that the other social relations we are building are not so other after all”. It is interesting, then that the Sol was separate from the St. Paul’s encampment, it seems both physically and ideologically, using existing structures and organisational forms to teach (perhaps in an uninvited way - for more on uninvited teaching see Meighan, 2002) people to be more democratic. As the Sol was separate from the boundaries of the case study I had defined, and as I had great difficulty in gaining access to anyone involved (an attempt was made to control my understanding of what they were doing by insisting on email correspondence only and cancelling any face to face meetings that had been arranged), I cannot assess or analyse in any depth the difference in the pedagogical style and content. However, suffice to say that the differences in the social relations I experienced with those instrumental in TCU; open, welcoming and warm, were very different

from those leading the Sol initiative; officious, bureaucratic and standoffish. Perhaps then, Gorz (1997: 46) was correct in saying that “the bourgeoisie succeeded in destroying at root what consciousness the proletariat might have had of its sovereign creativeness”. The question then is how do we *collectively* get it back?

This warning of Holloways brings us on to the difficult issue he warns against (2010): were they actually creating social relations that would allow for the emergence of a countervailing discourse or merely building a community of saints? This is a difficult question as the answer is complex and open to individual interpretation. However, the danger is that the issue could become masked, as it was very easy to romanticise what was happening within Occupy, for me and other visitors:

CE: because what I saw, when I came down, was the feeling, whether it was inside the tent, or surrounding it, was that what had been created was what Andy Merrifield calls, a site of slippage,

Occupier: yes, yes it was

CE: very much, yeah, so that's what it felt like the whole premise, the whole space felt like a site of slippage

Occupier: yeah,

CE: or like Holloway might call it a crack

And for the occupiers themselves:

and I've seen lots of people come down and there's the meeting of minds and people with lots of very interesting ideas, discussing them, exchanging ideas, seeing how they can develop them, you know, synergy, as much as I hate that word, (laughs) so, and that, there's an interesting social experiment, you could say

The occupy camp has been an education. It has posed many questions and answered some.... The tent city at St. Paul's provides space for visitors from around Britain and the world to reflect on what we are doing and consenting to. For the first time, we've had an

opportunity to speak plainly to those who have a disproportionate amount of power; we only gained this by camping on their doorstep. It is in the public interest that we are learning about conditions worldwide and starting to identify with people around the globe. What I am really grateful for is the communal exploration of imagination and creativity. The unexpected interactions and enlightening conversations

(Ashman, 2012)

These accounts may be dismissed as romanticising the movement and at this point caution should be taken, as many scholars, (for example, Chomsky, 2012; Gitlin, 2013; Graeber, 2011 and others) have had a tendency to want to see the best of Occupy, the reasons for this are obvious from the political leaning of that list of names alone. I am with them. I wanted to work in solidarity; I wanted to believe that Occupy was what it seemed to be and more. However, a step back needed to be taken for a critical eye and there were other elements to Occupy that a final analysis uncovers. As stated in the discussion of bricolage as the chosen methodology for this study, researchers, as critical friend, have to be there to assist social movements gain a criticism that extends to their behaviours and shortcomings.

This notion however is not always as easy as it sounds, for example one Occupier told me that she was “*glad that academics are interested and taking some notice of us*”, the ORC Convergence told a different story:

One older man said that it was impossible to research social movements unless you were “wholeheartedly involved in the activism of the movement”, he refused to accept that perhaps the criticism that comes from not being a full participant was beneficial to both research and to the movement itself. There was a great deal of divisive language and dichotomy forming; insider/outsider, researcher/activist and for some it was a case of never the twain shall meet

(Fieldwork journal, 2013)

In fact, I recorded that day that some of the Occupiers went out of their way to make delegates who were researchers, not Occupiers, feel guilty about their presence there, as if we were an unwelcome intrusion into their private lives. Perhaps this was their political standpoint as Schmitt (1996) suggests, that they had to have an enemy, there were only friends and foes. Perhaps this should have been challenged by Occupy and instead of a challenge being attempted in that forum by those they had identified as enemy? There were some Occupiers who were obviously uncomfortable with the discussion at the ORC convergence, however, they never ventured an opinion. After all the debate, all the discussions, had Occupy never got over a fear of conflict? I wondered if the notion of agonisms, of multitude and even of truly radical democratic politics had actually escaped them because they did not want to seem to have internal conflict. If so, Occupy was actually reproducing some debilitating capitalist values: conformity, compliance and placidity. So had this form of organic, critical pedagogy defied theory so much that it was actually merely reproducing those values under a different guise?

A further example of where Occupy were less than inclusive and may even have been reproducing debilitating capitalist values was the wide usage of the expression 'sheeple', which came to mean people that blindly followed the status quo, but was often extended to anyone outside the movement:

I hate it when people I work with come out with the sheeple, as if everybody's just stupid. Everybody is actually very intelligent and that's why I believe so much in these alternative education things, because for me it's about consciousness. And desire is so much constructed around us particularly if we live in the city, because if you watch television or listen to the radio or just anything that comes at us is, everything around us is like a representation of something else, so following desires that people feel they are so free to do are so carefully, well not carefully, are so insidiously formed by what the

economy and what politics would like us to be and how we fit into that system

This extract does show that not everyone in the movement was in agreement about the use of these sorts of terms and their use was being deconstructed by some. However, my experience of the 'us' and 'them' attitude in the ORC convergence and other issues discussed below, indicated that some members of Occupy at least felt that they were in some specific way 'different' to others.

The use of terms such as 'sheeple' often becomes what Freire (1993b) calls sloganisation that, he claims, in itself masks political fictions and obscures 'reality' from the gaze of critical consciousness. Freire argues that the oppressors use sloganisation to these ends and the idea is extended in Guy Debord's (1977) *Society of the Spectacle*. Wherein reality is masked by spectacle creating the role of the subject as object spectator rather than subject actor. Freire's argument goes on to propose that if the oppressed use sloganisation, it is with the intention to entice the people to blindly follow them and not to think critically about what the oppressed vanguard is doing, but to dazzle the oppressed people into accepting a sloganized version of reality.

In their political activities the dominant elites utilize the banking concept to encourage passivity in the oppressed, correspondingly with the latter's 'submerged' consciousness, and take advantage of that passivity to 'fill' that consciousness with slogans which create even more fear of freedom. This practice is incompatible with a truly liberating course of action, which, by presenting the oppressor's slogans as a problem helps the oppressed to 'eject' those slogans from within themselves. After all the task of the humanists is not that of pitting their slogans against those of the oppressors, with the oppressed as the testing ground, 'housing' the slogans of first one group and then the other. On the contrary, the task of the humanist is to see that the oppressed become aware of the fact that as dual

beings 'housing' the oppressors within themselves, they cannot be truly human.

(Freire, 1993a: 76)

In the case of the 'sheeple', even people who were not questioning the status quo would probably not want the derogatory term applied to them and therefore it works paradoxically to its intension: in Freirean terms, the use of this sort of term correlates to support of the oppressors by continuing to dehumanise the people through sloganisation, an Othering of those not involved in the struggle. The oppressed cannot 'eject' the slogans of the oppressors if they are fed dehumanising slogans from those who see themselves as their potential emancipators. The term therefore potentially creates a singular 'us' and a plural 'them', a friend or foe dichotomy that disavows the oppressed and undermines the inclusivity of Occupy. It separates the 'us' - the vanguard fighting on behalf of the wretched 'sheeple' - the 'sheeple' who are too blind, or too stupid or too fooled by the system to realise what oppressive conditions they are living under, and the final 'them' of the already sloganized '1%'. The slogan of the 1% and the 99% was at least inclusive of the majority and defined only those who had caused the problem they were dissenting against as the 'foe'. Therefore caution is to be taken about any form of sloganisation, however, this particular sloganized 'us' and 'them' dichotomy had some basis: the (mal)distribution of global wealth (however (in)accurate the 1% figure is), as the basis for the Othering of the wealthy minority as 'foe'.

Other divisions in allegiance and membership surfaced in Occupy, indicating that the movement was not perhaps as inclusive and critical as it seemed; there was nothing that seemed concrete, just an expressed unease:

... the variety of people, there's people who I would describe as professional activists, there's people who work for, or have done lots of activity for, with all sorts of NGOs and charities. And it's interesting because they, it's this whole thing of how can you ever be unbiased, because of disclosing things, you know because if you're like involved in Greenpeace and you come down here then what's the difference between that and being heavily involved in Liberal Democrats and coming here? The answer is that technically there is no difference, but practically somebody's going to go, the vast majority of conscious people think, you have a social conscience, you're from Greenpeace so of course you can be part of this, even though you might be influencing the agenda from an outside, or I don't know, you know, whatever..... Whereas the liberal Democrats, some people might believe that the Liberal Democrats offer us the best vision for the future, etc., so they might have exactly the same intensions but if they kind of walked around with a Liberal Democrat badge on, they wouldn't be told to go away, but you know they would be, I dunno, I don't know what it would be....I don't know what it would be, but you're allowed to walk around with a Greenpeace hoodie..... and nobody would bat an eyelid, I'm not saying that's a bad thing, but it's an interesting thing.

When this Occupier was giving this account, their hesitation and discomfort was obvious which could suggest that questioning these things was not encouraged and therefore the individual Occupiers were not seen as wholly agentic within the context of the movement practice. This was seemingly apparent when one triangulates all of these seemingly isolated issues: the frowned upon questioning of the consensus democracy model; the lack of sensitivity concerning quite overt sexism; the failure to provide what was termed 'safe space'; and the use of sloganisation. The same issues were skirted around in various other conversations I had and internet feeds I saw. There was a hegemony of sorts at work here that made, at least, some of the Occupiers uncomfortable.

Returning to the notion of dialogue within this new context, Freire (1993a: 72) contends that

founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence. It would be a contradiction in terms if dialogue – loving, humble and full of faith - did not produce this climate of trust, which leads the dialoguers into ever closer partnership in the naming of the world.....to glorify democracy and to silence the people is a farce; to discourse on humanism and to negate the people is a lie.

Was trust the missing element that made the use of words like ‘sheeple’ acceptable to some or the notion that you were more welcome to join the discussion in a Greenpeace hoodie than a Liberal Democrats badge, or that women were to be accepted as equals but teased for their becoming that? Certainly, there were problems with trust generally, as heard earlier²¹. However, what is now being examined is whether that dis-trust was also evident inside, particularly within the education. As bell hooks (1994: 12) contends, “the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility.....for years it has been undermined by teachers and students alike who seek to use it as a platform for opportunistic concerns rather than a place to learn”. The classroom on the streets of London seemed to be no different, in some respects, even with the lack of teachers and everyone claiming to be a student. During the encampment, Occupy did seem, to many, to be an emergent space of radical possibility, however, some of the prejudices seemed ever present as this extract from my journal shows:

Another young man told me he was from the ‘estates’ now synonymous with the ‘ghetto’ [his words, not mine]. He told me education has to be the point of what they were doing he said ‘we

²¹ There is also an understandable amount of distrust when the media are portraying you in unfavourable ways for example: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2053463/Occupy-London-90-tents-St-Pauls-protest-camp-left-overnight.html>. Another issue was that during the encampment it had come out that undercover police officers had infiltrated the environmental movement over a long period and had even resulted in relationships forming between police officers and unwitting women involved in the movement, some of those relationships even resulted in the women having children. The Metropolitan Police have since been taken to court over the matter.

have to teach the kids because my generation is fucked, messed up by a fucked up education system'. He was not as articulate as most of the people I had met so far, he spoke with passion, not intellect, but he got it and he obviously felt that his voice was as valid as the next persons, the others let him speak, but the attitude was noticeably different to him because of his vernacular, they looked a little embarrassed by his articulation, but let him speak anyway – are they equal?

(Fieldwork journal, 2011)

The reviewed literature insisted that the learners should be trusted and treated as intelligent, agentic beings, which the conversations suggest they were to certain degrees. The TCU slogan 'Anyone can Teach, Everyone can Learn' seemed to be being respected and enacted, but perhaps not equally. Rancière's (1991) notion of Universal Teaching insisted that education must start from a belief in the equality of intelligence and, although from my interaction I can only speculate as to whether that was a fundamental belief or a mere slogan from TCU, what was evident was that class, among other things, was still playing a role in, perhaps not who got to speak, everyone was *able* to speak if they felt they could, but more in how long they could speak for and how they were listened too. When I had conversations with groups of people, hierarchies developed during the conversation as to who should speak to 'the researcher'. I was also told that this was true of the media too (conversations with Occupiers), that even though Occupy had no official spokespersons, there were some people who were put forward and given that platform and others who were discouraged.

One occupier spoke of these tensions:

There is no kind of defined leadership or goal. It's all very, I dunno, I wouldn't say vague because everybody knows what they want, but it's just freeform you could say, and it's interesting to see how conversations like that can develop themselves. Because there's a

number of people who try to make sure it doesn't become one-upmanship or, he who speaks the loudest gets in. It's very much a vibe in the meetings that the decisions and the discussions of specific issues, which does involve a lot of educating each other, that we're trying to place equal weight on whatever anyone says regardless of how able they are to put it across well

This notion of people trying to make sure 'it doesn't become one-upmanship' attends to the problematic of the political tensions and antagonisms. One Occupier articulated this particular aspect of the forming social relations as needing to *desire* tension in our relations: "*something also we're not used to desiring is conflict and tension because we're used to things being modelled, laid-out, but those things do change and those things do involve negation*".

Another occupier put it this way:

I think we need to figure out how to be ok with not knowing, tension is hugely important to me, if everything is in place in your life, you have no tension and what are you going to do? You're going to look around for more stuff to need, to create that tension, so physically, emotionally and spiritually that there's got to be some kind of inherent tension between things otherwise you won't figure anything out or learn anything if you don't need it. You need to search, but you need to know that you need to search.

Of course, desiring, dealing with and maintaining these tensions takes trust and the constant reinvention of the countervailing discourse so as not to stagnate. It takes a huge amount of trust to be able to cope with constant tensions and revisions in social relationships. This is because, according to some, tensions happen when individuals co-operate and dialogue, especially about politics: "...rage and politics should never have been separated. Without the first the second is lost in discourse; without the second the first exhausts itself in howls" (The Invisible Committee, 2009: 111). These tensions are also thought of as a healthy part of a functioning radical

democracy (Mouffe, 2005, 2013; Rancière, 1998). If a radical democracy is functioning as it should, then tensions will, and should, arise. However, as von Kotze (2012: 105) interjects, when there are obvious signs that tension is uncomfortable or mishandled (in the case of the one-upmanship) the question becomes, “how do we get the imagination ‘unstuck’ when it has succumbed to hegemony – when it struggles to break out of normalised values and structures, relations and oppressions?” As has been evident “even hope and imagination are not inevitably democratic and progressive; they can be instrumentalised and harnessed to values of consumption and competition” (von Kotze, 2012: 105).

I would argue that Occupy did at least attempt to fight against constructed desires on behalf of repressed desires as we have heard many times from their testimony reported here, and as Holloway (2010: 64) says, “the problems are probably inevitable”. As this occupier states;

what the Occupy movement COULD do was to start conversations. We, the people, could just ignore the 1% for a minute, get together for a chat and say, ‘This isn’t really working out for us, is it? What kind of world do we want to live in? And how do we get there?’ And that is what seemed to be happening quite naturally. People wanted to come and tell us their stories, and we listened (some of us).....they talked about their hopes for the future. We felt the mood was growing, and it was with us.

(Anonymous, 2012: 442)

These kinds of conversations that were reported over and over in the data should have the potential to be constitutive of a new form of ‘public’, a multitude whose strength lies in their ability to voice differences, sensitively and with conviction. However, what seemed instead to happen in Occupy, was that the voices that were dissenting against what clear ideology Occupy

did have – that of consensus decision making and the inclusion of certain sections of the political community in that process – were drowned out, halted, as they uncovered the problems in the movement, they showed it to be flawed. What was missing here, I would argue, is an acceptance of the flawed nature of all democratic systems, the need for the constant revolutionising of any democracy and the basis of democracy in agonism (Mouffe, 1999, 2013). Without these acceptances and recognitions, I would argue that a truly democratic and diverse revolutionary subject, in the guise of the multitude cannot be constituted.

These recognitions were difficult from within Occupy because of the complexity of the experience for the people involved. There always seemed to be an intoxicating sense of something different happening at the camp, which was intellectually seductive, and I sometimes got the impression that there was a duality at play, that people wanted to believe the movement was one thing even though they knew it was not. As Giroux (1983: 67) notes, “as a distortion ideology becomes hegemonic; as an illumination it contains elements of reflexivity and the grounds for social action” and I felt that there were elements of both components of ideology evident in the camp and in the testimonies of the occupiers:

CE: one of the things I wondered was whether it wasn't what it looked like... that it wasn't a kind of deliberative society, which it looks like from outside, but it sounds from what you're saying, that it is...

Occupier: well, no, I didn't say it is, I said that's the idea... but all this is, is a bunch of individuals, people who self-select to be here and self-select to get involved, so people are involved for many different reasons, and there are a lot of people here who are completely committed to the deliberative process, and see that as the way forward, and there are some people who are not so committed to the deliberative process, for whatever reason, be it they over-ridingly feel passionate about a single issue, and they, this is, this is conjecture, I'm not accusing anybody of anything in particular,

CE: no, no,

Occupier: knowing what human beings can be like, you know, people have a single issue they feel so passionately about, they're not really willing to compromise on it and all they want is for that to be excelled and pushed forward, and also I think there are certain people who do not, who appreciate the theory of it but, do not appreciate or understand the nuance of deliberation. Therefore, that tension is very often in the general assemblies

CE: right

Occupier: because, [...] you know this whole thing it's like, having a discussion about stuff requires patience, listening, trying to understand, being empathetic, and it's very easy to cut down an argument with an attack or an over simplification, you know, over simplifying or misrepresenting, you know, that sort of thing and people, it's an interesting forum in which people try their best to non-confrontationally notice when those sorts of short circuits of logic take place and to kind of bring things back to deliberation, so it's a very interesting thing

This extended to the way people saw the education in TCU, according to one Occupier who felt that there was a distortion, as Giroux described, of the ideology of TCU:

the way I see TCU is that its conceptual, to me in my mind, when I say TCU I'm talking about the whole package, the things we talked about, what we tried to achieve, erm, the bringing people in and the really hoping for a two way street in terms of learning or whatever, and yet people around us, you know, very good friends, see TCU as a tent. And it becomes obvious to me when people say we need to reinstate TCU, it's very obvious to me that they're talking about setting up a tent and just doing something

These issues not only illustrate that hegemonic ideology about spaces and relationships had not been fully shaken off by some in the camp, but also that they were not fully avoiding the vanguardism of Holloway's 'community of saints', and thus may have been reproducing the dehumanising power of society and therefore education. If dehumanisation is being (re)produced in the practice, then the educative activities cannot treat all the learners as

intelligent, agentic beings. For the individual involved, I would argue that Occupy succeeded and failed to varying degrees, as a movement it gave hope for other ways of being and doing education, but did not live up to its full potential. It failed to internally produce a *fundamentally* counter-hegemonic politics and countervailing discourse through its pedagogical activities. Perhaps this was due to differing ideas about what constitutes the political: whether the political should be calming, or disturbing, confrontational, fluid or set. This account shows the effect on the individual of this failure:

CE: so what do you think will happen now?

Occupier: I don't know, I don't know I'm frustrated and upset and I'm stuck, I've learned so much and I can do so much, but I can't fix the world by myself, I don't know, from where I sit now how I'm going to channel everything I've got....I'm sure something will happen at some point, but right now I'm just sitting in a void, what a shame.

CE: it is, it is..... it will be interesting to see what happens over the next few years to all these...

Occupier: it will because at the moment every day there is another bloody hit and another hit, and another hit, and I used to have escapism fantasies,there is no way to get off this bloody Earth and it is really difficult right now not to lose hope. I refuse to lose hope but when you get right down, I'm not right down now, I was, [...] but you lift yourself up, but when I'm right down its just pure despair. The first sign for me of losing hope is that I get really angry at everyone for being stupid, and that's really not good and I have to start backing away when I feel that coming and then that turns to despair, you're like, there's nothing, there's nothing, the world's going to hell....so yeah, it will be interesting to see what happens because I'm not in despair, I still have hope, but I'm just so flipping angry that I have so much potential and I'm just sitting here on my arse, and you know you have to have boundaries as well and you must refuse to work at something you don't see is going to work, you must step back, even if it means you must sit on your hands for years, because if you don't know how are you going to bring about the changes, you must always trust yourself,

CE: I agree, do you think the experience that people have had with the learning...I mean obviously it sounds like it has for you, the experience people have had with occupy, with TCU and with the whole thing has changed them fundamentally and permanently?

Occupier: absolutely it has, absolutely without a doubt, yes. And it's amusing, we joke about it amongst ourselves [...] the guys sent me a video recently that was taken in the early days of St. Paul's camp, he sent it in an email and the heading said, 'look me before I was broken', so we joke about it, that we're broken, but breaking is a good thing, I mean that's the thing I'm talking about its like losing the distractions of life around you, and taking it on the chin because it's real, it's painful, it is so painful to be open to the real, because you see the humanity and you see how people are hurting, and you know it doesn't have to be like that yet people outside of your circles just continue to reproduce that, and it hurts, it hurts so much and that's why we joke about being broken because it's a very melancholy place, to maintain your sense of humour, and you walk around and you carry the world on your back sometimes

6.5 Was the education at the same time confronting and convivial?

The final section of the analysis of Occupy comes from Ira Shor's (1996) notion that education can, or possibly, should, be at the same time convivial and confronting. This, then, begs the question as to how do a group, a community, a society, sustain a sense of togetherness of sociality, producing this conviviality, whilst navigating the necessary divisions of an agonistic democracy. Therefore, it may now be appropriate to begin to understand such issues as the emotional responses to learning, whether it was accepted that knowledge is always partial and incomplete. Also, in this final analysis, I argue that it is important, if we are to bring any knowledge to bear on pedagogical organisation for social change, to understand whether Occupy's educational organisation protected against or produced vanguards, which has already been explored a little, and lastly does the education release a new revolutionary theory through the countervailing discourses this work seeks to uncover?

With these questions in mind, an exploration of the moments of pedagogy to uncover potential answers is needed. Such as this one:

There's one guy that I can just hang out with and have a laugh with and talk for two hours with who's very different but in the end it's fine because we've had a good old political argument, and we can argue about anything and that's fine, you know, whereas in your job you kind of can't do that you know or you worry about losing your job, don't you? Or you know, it's kind of like a community feeling really. And also, like I went down to the London Stock Exchange and then if I go to other cities I'll just hang out and say hello

This Occupier retells a tale of conviviality alongside a tale of learning acceptance, which may well have been initially confronting. In fact, in this conversation, I recall that this particular Occupier was constantly realising how much they had changed through their interaction with Occupy. This realisation of how much people had changed was a constant theme throughout the conversations, which in turn made the conversations convivial too. von Kotze (2012: 111) insists that “we must open that imaginary window and throw our imaginations beyond what is, towards what could be” and this was often illustrated through the stories of the Occupiers and indeed, in their retelling. It also seemed that the learning was greater in some ways for those taking an active role in organising learning activities under changing contexts:

[after the camp and during the spring actions] within these actions we in TCU were still working very strongly as a group. But we had to shift our focus from this experiment, this place of learning to the teach-out concept, erm, so I suppose a lot of what we did, the idea behind it was to come into this space and have a general consciousness awakening, not only within the group but, you know, when you start focussing on teach-outs, you had to play out externally what was happening internally, in our spaces, so the only spaces we could create in the spring actions, were, you know you'd land in a spot somewhere in the city. One day in particular, May 12th, we were on the steps of the Bank of England, and then several invited speakers will then speak, interestingly, those groups that would come to us for

direct action, were the kind of groups that were used to organising break out groups and people were really reluctant to do that and you end up standing there talking at them and that was extraordinary because to be forced to recalibrate the whole thing because people want to just sit and listen, it was quite disheartening, actually, you know that was like a bust, because what you're doing then is that you're curating the information, and there's no two way thing at all

The changing context here from the TCU fixed place in the camp, to the more roving teach-out context was quite confronting for this Occupier as there was a realisation that what they thought they had achieved was contextualised by the space . Therefore, it was a contextual and temporal achievement rather than a new set of social relations that could be perpetuated after the encampment. The 'two-way street' that this Occupier talks of should create the possibilities for the (co)production or (co)construction of knowledge, however, the context is important and this forced context of the teach-outs necessitated a lecture style format.

However, Freire said

the question is not banking lectures or no lectures, because traditional teachers will make reality opaque whether they lecture or lead discussions. The question is the content or dynamism of the lecture, the approach to the object to be known. Does it critically re-orientate students to society? Does it animate their critical thinking or not? You take your speech as a kind of oral codification of a problem, now to be decoded by the students and you.

(Freire in Shor & Freire, 1987: 40)

Therefore, according to Freire, so as long as the person lecturing is intent on liberation with their learners and has the skills to ensure that this is what is happening, the lecture format does not necessarily create unequal power relations. However,

unequal power relations should not be equated with oppression. Rather it is the (deliberate) abuse or (unwitting) misuse of power that

should be recognised as the basis of oppression. As with power as a disposition, structural relations offer the potential for oppression, but simply having a hierarchy is not necessarily oppressive

(Thompson 2007: 10)

Therefore, the confronting nature of the changing context for this Occupier may not need have been so confrontational if they had had more theoretical knowledge about pedagogy, which could be gained from the 'grand action research cycle' the possibilities of which this work attempts to explore.

Several other Occupiers, found that learning to live without the usual structures was both confronting and convivial as they express here:

I really didn't get a lot of what occupy was about at the start, and, for example one thing is the flat structure of it, an organisation where there's no hierarchy, I went in there thinking, right who do I speak to? Who's the person in charge of this and who's in charge of that and we need to do this, I went in with my sort of old fashioned or my mainstream view of we need a hierarchy and this person needs to organise that and actually, I understand why it's got no leaders, but I do find that very frustrating, because it means that some things don't get done or that it takes ages for things to get done and I still fight with that internally because I just want things, like if someone says they're going to do something, you do it, but I don't know maybe that's me thinking that's the old way of doing things, like you set up a committee and take a bit of responsibility and you do it. Whereas in occupy it's sort of so fluid.

The evidence from the Occupiers does suggest that the educative activities, including the experience of being involved, encouraged an emotional response. The frustration felt and the learning to accept was an educational experience that allows an imagining that a non-hierarchical organisational structure could be possible, with time, energy, belief and political will. I would argue that the efforts of TCU encouraged this way of thinking but missed some forms of oppression that could have been used as teaching points for the exploration of oppressive behaviours, as discussed in the previous

sections. However, Occupy opened up the possibilities, Occupiers thought about and confronted ideas that they previously had no space to experiment with. The experience was embodied and performative because of the context and setting therefore emotionality could hardly have been avoided. Occupy gave its activists an outlet for their anger, a focus and a channel, whether we concede that it worked or are disappointed by its failure, it attempted to do something positive, whilst avoiding cynicism or unbalanced fury, and it did it with a generous heart (Freire, 1993a). However, as Steinklammer (2012: 33) adds,

in social conflicts such informal learning processes are much more likely to take place. However, there is a danger that these learning experiences remain covert and unconscious and, without conscious educational processes in which those resistant and empowering experiences of practice can be taken up and used as a point of departure, they cannot fulfil their full empowering potential.

And there was, indeed, a disillusionment that was felt by some of the occupiers about what they had learnt and what they had achieved:

I've become so stressed by it that I really can't think of the time line of this but very recently, there was a final straw incident for me. Consensus is about agreement, in fact I did some research around consensus after the fact, just to get my head around what happened here, and what continues to happen if you are going to doggedly stick to the consensus model, and this is really controversial and this is why I can't really say I speak for, well you know, you can't leave occupy because it's part of you, but I don't feel I can for instance do press work and stuff anymore as I had been doing, because I don't believe that the consensus model works, at all. And over time it wears you down, it's about agreement, but what happens to me, whenever I'm faced with something I would really like to get through, is, there's almost a sort of lowest common denominator factor, in play, so in order to achieve what is seen as agreement, what you've got is a series of people voting, ... for or against the proposal, but now somebody's got the right to block, now if there's a block then no consensus can be achieved. The block is where the abuse of the system lies because it goes both ways, the block can be used abusively by an individual for personal vendetta reasons or whatever their thing is, he or she can use the block so that nothing can happen,

so nothing happens and the consensus model says that you write in the minutes consensus not reached, but that's not the end of it, in reality there's all kinds of fallout from that so that's the one direction of abuse, the other direction is how it abuses people who are reticent to use the block because they recognise that people would like this proposal to happen, if they blocked it, it wouldn't happen so they have to either stand down, or decide that they agree or they don't so then you've got a situation where somebody is, whatever their personal thing is, are not prepared to make a block. Therefore they're constantly frustrated and not in agreement but going along with what is seen as the majority, now it would be great, if the majority were actually in attendance, but they're not, so consensus might be reached on something with only 7 people in the room. But the ripple effect is massive so yeah, so that is how I'm seeing it so over time it wears you down because you, I won't block something until I did and I really meant it. But it resulted in my walking away.

This seemed a serious part of the disillusionment in Occupy and part of the 'learning' that seemed to me the most uncritical. However, it could be argued that as an experimental community that this is actually where Occupy achieved the most, the apparent failure of the consensus model. Occupy arguably showed that this model is unworkable at the present time and that participatory democracy may need to be reined in from the all-out consensus model. One of the missed potentials for Occupy, it seems, was moving on and learning from this potential failure of their ideological organisation. The problem, Holloway (2010: 71) insists is that "this walking on the edge of disillusionment is what dignity means in a society of negation", but is it dignified, then, to do what this Occupier calls doggedly stick to a principle, even in the face of it being abused and not working? This is a big area - that of the insistence on consensus decision-making - where Occupy did not create new knowledge by encouraging the view that knowledge is partial and incomplete. The mistake seemed to be made that there was a system of democracy that 'must' work because it is fair, equal and allows everyone a

voice, but once that mistake was realised their disillusionment in their ideal meant that they could not move on from the failure.

This insistence of sticking doggedly to a principle can have the effect of producing vanguards within the movement as it effectively says to the majority that this movement was founded on these principles, we are not changing them and therefore you are either with us or you are not. As we saw from the Occupier earlier, this issue resulted in them walking away.

Even when the ideal was felt to be working by most, concerns were starting to surface, that were ignored:

even during the camp even when it was going quite well the problem with consensus is the extent to which the voices, the louder voices are going to be heard and there was never any question as to who wasn't speaking and why they weren't speaking. So there were many situations in which things would happen and things would be pushed through that I know for a fact that there were people who just didn't feel that given the atmosphere, given the conversation, that they could have a voice.

Therefore it can be argued that this issue, for many, one of the main features of Occupy, that of rethinking democracy (Occupy London LXS, 2011), was the main place where vanguards were able to coalesce. By not questioning who was not speaking, or why, vanguards of the movement arose, perhaps incidentally, merely due to their voices being louder and having to reach consensus to get anything done. This seemed doubly damaging to the movement, as this sort of elitism, forming vanguards by manipulating the direction of the movement, amounts to what Freire (1993a: 162) calls 'cultural invasion': "cultural invasion, which through alienation kills the creative enthusiasm of those who are invaded, leaving them hopeless and fearful of risking experimentation, without which there is no true creativity".

Therefore, Occupy is once again apparently damaged by potentially creating, in those excluded from the decision making, hopelessness and fearfulness of risking experimentation, the very thing that Occupy was set up to do.

In terms of the politics that were actually practiced rather than idealised, Occupy did not release new revolutionary theory as many hoped it would. What it seemed to do however, was make people think differently, imaginatively, critically about what is and what could be. It did uncover some political fictions disguised as social realities yet it (re)produced others. It remains to be seen how the dissolution, the anger and the hurt that some of the Occupiers I spoke to experienced will be used. During Occupy a great deal was learnt, social relations were produced otherwise, sometimes not in the ways they were intended, but this still has the potential to produce heightened critical awareness of the issues as they relate to transformative change. Occupy also produced a warning about repression, about the new responses of the state to dissent, it produced those globally.

However, it seems that what Occupy did was to make connections between people that may not otherwise have ever connected:

they are all of a sudden exposed to the utter humanity of the very things that they're talking about theoretically. And it's verylevelling is the wrong word because it lifts you up ... because not only are you like oh my god not only is this theory one thing, you know you are met with human relations in their rawest form. Which you do not have in your everyday life and that to me was the magic.

It created the conditions for learning to take place:

I've definitely got more critical because at the GAs sometimes we would discuss ideologies and politics for three hours.

The biggest apparent failure, which does point to some conditions upon which new revolutionary theory could be built, was that Occupy seemed to reproduce, or at least fail to recognise and confront, one of the main issues that exists in our society today. That of patriarchy:

now I personally and generally am very outspoken and very, people who know me generally think we'll have to make sure that [this person] is satisfied before anything happens, (laughs), I never spoke at a GA, I would just sit there and watch it, why would I bother even trying? I'd be shouted down I'd be, and then it would create such a hassle for me afterwards if I disagreed with something if I used a block. We did occupy the women's library at London Metropolitan.....and that was a self-declared feminist space, and we had a big GA and everything and it was very interesting to me that there I am, you couldn't stop me and I'm just watching myself there and thinking ah, that felt safe and I actually, that's when my extreme dissatisfaction with my own particular Occupy situation began, with that and I realised that it became normalised to me that I wasn't able to articulate myself in a GA. And I thought wow how did that happen?

I would argue that new revolutionary theory cannot be produced until there is a safe space within the revolutionary activities for everyone, which means uncontested equality. I did not see, experience or hear of any racism, homophobia or ableism in Occupy - that does not mean it was not there, although nor does it mean that it was. Nevertheless, if this form of patriarchal behaviour, including the 'acceptable' sexism, was present, there was a definite failing to produce safe space, where all people felt that they could articulate, experiment and experience the prefiguration of a new form of social relations as a whole person, defined by their individual creativity and commitment to social justice. I argue therefore, that it is important to recognise what lies deeply embedded inside of each individual and recognise that as a revolutionary problematic and not as a deceit perpetuated by others, as that is destructive: "the feeling that we've been tricked is like a wound that is becoming increasingly infected. It is the source

of the latent rage that just about anything will set off these days” (The Invisible Committee, 2009: 90). As heard earlier, Holloway (2010: 224-5) asserts,

revolution, then, is the return of the repressed. Not just of the repressed sections of the population (proletarians, women, indigenous, blacks, and so on), but of that which is repressed within us. It is the revolt of that which exists against and pushes beyond. It is the revolt of creative doing that exists against alien determination and pushes beyond, towards self-determination. But creative doing is not just creation of that which exists outside us, but self-creation, creation of our own sexuality, our own culture, our own thinking and feeling.

If Holloway is correct that new social relations are not just outside, then if new social relations are to be developed, individuals must reinvent themselves too. Thus, as Steinklammer (2012: 33) suggests, a task for critical education is to provide the space to bring “informal learning processes to consciousness, to reflect on them and to develop further strategies for action in exchange with others”.

It seems that the key issues that can be learnt from Occupy, from an educational point of view, are that perhaps there is the need for some form of pedagogical self-monitoring, or as suggested in Chapter Three, a critical friend, or even a pedagogue to pick up those behaviours and conditioned responses that infected Occupy. It is acknowledged that in the heat of experimentation it is easy to see failures where there might be learning, despair where there might be a lesson in understanding, oppression and subjugation where there could be an understanding of the Other’s point of view. The leaderlessness of Occupy might have been a real ideal, but in practice they potentially created vanguards and their own repressive policing systems. Perhaps some sense of where to go when things were not as equal

as they were intended to be, some arbitrator of disputes could have been productive. It may have been useful for other epistemologies to be introduced, adapted and experimented with: the Zapatistas mantra of ruling we obey (Ross, 2006); the Rwandan 'justice on the grass' model (Temple-Raston, 2005); there may even be lessons from the world's truth commissions (Grandin, 2005), the world is full of both failed and successful political projects to be learnt from.

In conclusion of this discussion, it has to be said that Occupy did succeed to an extent to create a new way of learning. In terms of our theorists; Ranci  re, Shor, Freire and Holloway, it gives a great deal of food for thought, and the data will always be brought, as Schostak and Schostak (2008) would say, into other imaginaries in other contexts and will forever inform my thinking. However, it would seem to enact some portions of all of the theory and challenge others, again, there is no purity.

What strikes me as very important in the accounts of the educative activities and the experience of the camps in general, was the essentiality of democracy – not the general consensus decision-making process, but the feeling of democratic relations, the essence of shared power. This speaks to Shor's model of power sharing pedagogy, guided by classroom democracy. The insistence in TCU of bringing in 'experts' but then asking them to work in a way where their expertise was not elevated above being part of the conversation, creates equality, wherein power can easily be shared. A dialogue with the people, as Freire might call it, but one where the dialogue is set by no one and is allowed free range for discovery.

The big question then, in terms of this work is what are the most essential elements of creating the space for this power-sharing, democratic, popular education that allows for an emergent countervailing discourse? The evidence from Occupy, suggests that the *priority* is creating a truly safe space: safe from oppression, discrimination, domination and abuse. Once this space is created, Occupy's experience suggests that fundamental equality of intelligence (Ranci re, 1991) must be respected for the learning to have transformative effects and that 'experts' should value the knowledge, experience and expertise that all learners bring to the pedagogical space in order to create a truly shared, democratic power relation in the classroom.

The task now, is to turn to the next two sites of potential slippage to understand which of these conditions, and their associated nuances, have been met in those purporting to be doing things differently. Then, if they are not being met, or not going far enough, to understand how much (re)organisation it might take to bring a more popular education to these spaces of learning. In addition, how best, then, could these spaces be utilised in order to bring about a practical theory of action to support these new social movements and popular education initiatives. Moreover, whilst supporting those who practice education otherwise, what forms of organisations could this education move towards, adopt and deploy, in order to create the necessary conditions for transformative change to a more socially just and radically democratic society. These are the terms of the analysis of the two supplementary sites: have they been any more successful in creating forms of organisation that are able to include voice, support action and create a countervailing discourse as well as evaluating its

effectiveness, alternatively, do they have the potential to move toward those forms of organisation?

Chapter Seven – Becoming Organised, the Social Science Centre and Lincoln University's Student as Producer

7.1 The Social Science Centre

When I spoke to the members of the SSC, there was a sense with most of them that they were doing something important, something politically different and that it mattered. There was also a sense that they felt that they were part of a vanguard movement of radical teaching and learning spaces. I couldn't help thinking that this was not entirely true, there was a history to what they were doing, their ideas were borrowed from others and they were only really having small success. However, I admired them for doing it, for experimenting with form and content. They were committed, that was obvious, to doing education otherwise, to creating the conditions necessary to ensure fundamental learning about the place they occupied in the world was understood, to create the conditions for understanding better the connections between the personal, the political and the global structures that need to change. Were they actually doing this? I remain unsure, I felt very much an outsider when I was there, some of the members were very welcoming, but they felt they were a special group, as if no one else could have been as radical as they.....

(Fieldwork Journal 2013)

Clearly education cannot be a social movement unto itself. Rather, education is an instrument of power which shapes knowledge within social movements

(Zacharakis-Jutz, 1991: 9)

The scholars at the SSC might tend to disagree with the above statement by Zacharakis-Jutz. In fact, when I spoke to Mike Neary, one of the founding scholars at the SSC, he told me that education had become the social movement of our time (conversation with Neary, 2013), a seductive idea, indeed, however, difficult to substantiate and not (so far) obvious of any educational project. Occupy tried to integrate education into their protests,

with varying success, as has been seen, but it was merely part of the whole event, happening, movement. The pedagogy was not a/the movement in itself. So what does happen if the event, the protest, the banners and slogans are left behind? Can education become the social movement? Can it create a large enough site of slippage (Merrifield, 2011), a significant enough crack in capitalism to be considered a movement? Giroux (2001: xxvii) concurs with the *possibility* of education as a movement: “at the very least, radical education proposes that education is a form of political intervention in the world and is capable of creating the possibilities for social transformation”. In addition, Castells (2012: 11) describes social movements thus, “by constructing a free community in a symbolic place, social movements create a public space, a space for deliberation, which ultimately becomes a political space”, which is essentially what the SSC has attempted to do, therefore supporting Neary’s claim that education may, indeed, *possibly* be considered a social movement as long as it meets the criteria of being a political, public space for deliberation.

Therefore, in this chapter the outcomes of the examination of Occupy are utilised to understand whether there are structures that already exist, or could be collectively constructed, that could support popular education initiatives, if not lead to, social movements, in this case the SSC and SaP. These two examples have been chosen for several reasons; firstly, they are already linked together and indeed have linked themselves to Occupy and therefore have the possible potential to form part of the feedback loop or grand action research cycle and secondly, The University of Lincoln was an unusual example of a university doing things differently in the current neoliberal times. This understanding is attempted by garnering an

understanding of these organisations in relation to what they can potentially offer in terms of understanding what they are and what support they might offer that would lead to the less hierarchical forms of pedagogy being able to rid themselves of oppressive behaviours and attitudes.

It is pertinent to mention at this point for a full picture of what has occurred within the research that Neary is one of a group of academics from the University of Lincoln who have been instrumental in setting up the SSC. He is also (at the time of writing) the Dean of Teaching and Learning for the University and was instrumental in realising the Student as Producer (SaP) Project at the University and very much sees the two projects as one in process. A great deal of the data in this section will contain Neary's words, as he was the most accessible person regarding the project. This gives a dominant view of what is happening in these two projects and it is wise to exercise caution, possibly scepticism, and recognise that what is therefore seen is predominantly rhetoric as my personal contact with the projects has been limited by time and access²².

At the time of my fieldwork there was a 'wall' of positivity around the SSC and particularly around Neary himself; he is a charismatic educator who is vocal at a time when most academics fear for their jobs (Bailey & Freedman, 2011; Collini, 2012; Williams, 2013). There is a great deal of support for both Neary and the projects he runs and it is difficult to find anyone saying anything negative about either. It is therefore with caution that I proceed into this analysis.

²² Access has never been denied although I did find it difficult to arrange to meet the other academics and students. I have also found funding a problem to gain access with a project that is expensive to reach. However, the SSC and Student as Producer are not the main focus of the research, but merely brief case studies to help the imagining of possibilities.

If one listens to those taking part in the SSC and to the rhetoric of the literature, one hears a group of people claiming to be determined to do things differently, to create a social movement of higher education that creates things otherwise, utilising what they assume is a more equitable and just organisational structure. As heard in the Introduction, Darder (2002: 30) asserts, “there is no question that, in today’s world, no authentic form of democratic life is possible for the future without a revolutionary praxis of hope that works for both the transformation of social consciousness on the one hand and the reconstruction of social structures on the other”. This is apparently what the members of the SSC are aiming for; creating this revolutionary praxis, this transformation of the social consciousness that develops sensitivity to any form of despotism and unequal power relations, coupled with the reconstruction of social structures. This was one of the failings of Occupy, to recognise the unequal relations that were perpetuated within the camps and beyond, therefore their revolutionary praxis was not complete. The SSC needs to be able to fulfil this criterion of a revolutionary praxis if it is to be assumed a mechanism or new social structure that could support initiatives, events or movements such as Occupy and other organically grown popular education projects. The task then is to try to understand if the SSC has the potential to fulfil this role as the next step in the trajectory from the streets to the academy. Therefore, if the SSC is examined as a differently organised popular education project that attempts to bridge the gap between the community and the University the following questions become central to this understanding:

- *Does it use democratic power sharing as a central principle?*

- *Does the SSC resolve the tension between student and teacher?*
- *Does the SSC create a 'safe space' in which the possibilities for learning flourish?*

The question of whether the SSC 'uses democratic power sharing as a central principle?' is a cautiously simple 'yes', it does, to varying extents, as I will further explain shortly. The question of resolving the tensions between teacher and student is slightly more complex, in that the answer is that it seems to try very hard to do just that. As for the question of safe space, the answer seems to be that potentially, if they can really resolve the tensions contained within the first two questions, an affirmative on the third should be the result. As Goodlad (1984: 249) explains, however, "we will only begin to get evidence of the potential power of pedagogy when we dare to risk and support markedly deviant classroom procedures", is it possible to make the argument that the SSC is one of those spaces of 'deviant classroom procedures' that may well illuminate the potential power of pedagogy?

This from Winn (2010) is from the original proposal for the SSC:

Courses will run in existing public spaces, with a view to buying or renting a city-centre property further down the line. Attached to this (preferably on the premises) would be some kind of cooperatively run business, which would bring in an income to help cover running costs and act as a way to connect with local residents apart from and beyond the educational provision of the Centre

This idea of attaching a business to the Centre carries with it the monetary relations of capitalist organisation (Marx, 1867/1976), however, it does subvert the flow of capital into the educational endeavour to enable it to be sustainable (Winn, 2010). The co-operatively run business would potentially make the centre accessible to those with low or no income and, as Winn

mentions, connecting with the community in a variety of ways. Katsiaficas (2006: 6) explains this as movements “subverting politics”, because they are “transforming public participation into something completely different from what is normally understood as political”. The SSC is already recognised as a ‘crack’:

John [Holloway] gave many examples of cracks in capitalism.... He instanced, among others, the Zapatistas, The Really Open University and the students taking the MA in Activism and Social Change at Leeds University he is currently working with. *Other excellent examples are the Social Science Centre at Lincoln and the Roundhouse Journal*

(Wassall (2011) Blog report of Holloway’s Leverhulme Lecture at Leeds University, my emphasis)

but does it meet our pedagogical criteria? We return now to the first criteria: does it use democratic power sharing as a central principle? The condition of democratic power sharing here is essential, because if the SSC does not create new social relations from its pedagogical initiative, the experience may not lead to social transformation and therefore it cannot support other initiatives that do. The SSCs education has to make explicit that the formation of conducive social relations is the key to the ‘circle of power’ (Rancière, 1991) which will enable learners to understand the conditions of their oppression and act upon them (Freire, 1993a).

The Constitution of The SSC (Social Science Centre, 2012) states, “the purpose of the co-operative is to pursue its objects as an autonomous association of persons united ...through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise”. This indicates that democracy, co-operation and shared ownership (if not power) are a main aim of what the SSC is attempting to do. The web site states, “the SSC is organised on the basis of

democratic, non-hierarchical principles, with all members having equal involvement in the life and work of the SSC” (Social Science Centre, 2012). This statement expresses principles that have been discussed as essential and although Neary (in conversation 2013) told me that the reality is clearly messier than the ideal, they insist that they attempt to resolve any tensions that arise from trying to enact this ideal, although there is still a way to go. Day (2005: 8, quoted in Foust, 2010: 2) argues, that the character of today’s resistance “undermines the standard ways of doing, and thinking about, political action: ‘what is more interesting about contemporary radical activism is that some groups are....operating non-hegemonically rather than counter-hegemonically. They seek radical change, but not through taking or influencing state power, and in doing so they challenge the logic of hegemony at its very core’”. This changing the logic of hegemony, speaks to the treatment of the ‘expert’ as was seen in the discussion of Occupy. The hegemony of the ‘expert knowledge’ no longer exists in the power-sharing classroom as it can be questioned and problematized. If the SSC is truly sharing power between the academics and the students then that suggests that there is potentially some sensitivity to the needs and desires of others in the SSC. In addition, what seems to unite the members of the SSC is their belief in co-operative, critical and autonomous education (conversations at the SSC, 2013). Of course, I cannot include ‘free’ education there as some of them do of course pay to be members of the SSC:

We do ask people to pay, but only if they can afford it. We ask for one hour’s salary per month, so that’s worked out on how much they earn. If they earn below a certain level, or they don’t work, then they don’t pay. That’s how we make it both accessible and sustainable,

hopefully! We have some members who pay, but have never actually come to a session; they're just supporting the work we do

(Neary: conversations at the SSC, 2013)

The SSC is well supported with around ninety members in their first year, only nine of which were active student scholars (SSC AGM, 2013; conversations at the SSC, 2013). This suggests a good level of support for the idea and indeed their web site states; "we think that our work in co-operative higher learning has the potential to transform the way in which higher education is being imagined, designed and undertaken" (Social Science Centre, 2012), suggesting that they have big ambitions. This sentiment is qualified here by Neary (Neary in Class War University, 2013), when he insists that "the SSC is not a demand for the state to provide higher education, but a recognition that revolutionary education cannot be provided by the capitalist state; and, therefore, we have no other option but to establish our own necessary revolutionary alternative form of higher education". This perhaps positions the SSC as a possible site of slippage between initiatives such as Occupy and the academy. As Bonnett (2013) suggests, "there is an interesting and potentially creative tension here. The centre does offer a structured and supportive educational experience, but the nature and politics of this experience is of its own devising". There does seem to be an interesting tension and as Shor (1996: 180) points out: "producing critical thought in an anti-critical culture is about as challenging as producing democratic relations in an unequal school system"; the SSC is effectively attempting to do both. I think it could be argued that the SSC is attempting to produce a democratic, power sharing curriculum, as their web site states, "we are working to create alternative spaces of higher education

whose purpose, societal value and existence do not depend on the decisions of the powerful” (Social Science Centre, 2012). Whether that works in practice remains to be seen.

I now turn to the question of the resolution of the tension between teacher and student. Neary (Neary in Class War University, 2013) explains that he “was interested in how teaching could be used as a way of radically transforming academic labour and student life”, believing that “at the very most, teaching politically can be used to reinvent higher education as a revolutionary political project” (Neary, 2012: 234) . This is not a new idea, as has been discussed already, but this project is, at least, something concrete in a world of political flux. Neary and Winn (2012: 14) have this to say about the teaching practices at the SSC:

The co-operative practices on which the management of the SSC is based extend to the ways in which courses are taught. All classes will be participative and collaborative, so as to include the experience and knowledge of the student as an intrinsic part of the teaching and learning programmes. Students will have the chance to design courses as well as to deliver some of the teaching themselves with support from other members of the project. Students will be able to work with other academics on research projects as well as publish their own writings. A core principle of the centre is that teachers and students and the supporting members learn from each other.

Certainly, at face value this sounds very much like an attempt to resolve any tension between teachers and students.

The SSC does however have a pre-planned curriculum, or syllabus, but perhaps it is potentially flexible enough and open enough to change. Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 120) insist that “to engender student engagement, in which students are involving their very beings and human conditions in the meaning making of academic subjects, one must recognise that learner

backgrounds and life experiences, including their academic experiences, are the only tools they have in order to engage in current learning". The SSC seem to have attempted to recognise this, the first, entry-level course, 'The Sociological Imagination' contains the ideas taken from Mill's (1957/2000) book of the same name. This course is described by Members of the Social Science Centre (2013: 66) as,

an open class run by and for people who want to develop a critical understanding of the social world through social-scientific inquiry. The class proceeds from scholars' everyday problematics to theoretical critique. Through this emerging curriculum, we take up Mill's key challenge: how can individuals who appear powerless change and transform wider social structures in ways that are progressive and humanizing. Why does it matter that we learn to make links between our own private troubles and our more collective public issues?

The group goes on to say that:

underpinning 'The Sociological Imagination' is the SSC's pedagogical approach, which attempts to fix the dysfunctional relationship between teaching and research that constitutes the core of higher education. We want to find ways to reconnect research and teaching, whilst at the same time removing the distinction between students and academics, seeing them both instead as scholars in pursuit of creating new knowledge

(Members of the Social Science Centre, 2013: 66)

However, this grand premise can be distorted as Shor (1996: 51) explains from his experience, "my authority can create an unauthentic discourse, what I call faux learning, a kind of theatre of manipulative discourse where students play at postures they think will help them get by". This faux learning did not seem to be evident in Occupy as there were no 'teachers' for the learners to please and the experts were treated as equals in the learning process, as was seen, however, it did take place on some levels mainly as positioning for different viewpoints and groups. The SSC members assert

that they are committed to resolving what Neary calls this 'dysfunction', and it seems that this commitment is somewhat enacted. Neary (Neary in Class War University, 2013) also insists that this essential aspect is monitored from within:

[a] sense of imagination and the imaginary extends to the way in which the centre is managed and run, with time set aside to consider the meaning and purpose of the Centre, using the critical concepts developed in the SSC sessions: gender, ethics and power, to build our own sense of collective activity. These critical reflections can lead us to challenge our own working practices, including, and in particular, how power is distributed across the collective and whose knowledge within the group is privileged

This reflection is something that Occupy lacked and may have contributed to its downfall, as discussed in the last chapter.

This reflection on relationships has the potential to allow for the challenges to power relations that were absent in Occupy, but only if sufficient time were set apart and if a sufficiently skilled pedagogue were present to challenge unequal power relations in a sensitive way until the relationship grew as Freire insists it would:

through dialogue, the teacher-of-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but the one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn, while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which they all grow

(Freire, 1993a: 61)

This aspect of the SSC model could be a crucial aspect for the trajectory that this work explores, however, my observations of the interactions between the various members of the SSC indicate that they may have some way to go before all of the tensions are resolved: there does indeed seem to still be a

hierarchy between the 'academics' and the 'students' at the SSC. These examinations of the working relationships, if taken further and acted upon, could assist movements and other popular education initiatives to come to terms with their conditioned behaviours that threaten their existence, as the gender and other relations did in Occupy. More generally, they could allow any form of education, organised with this reflection as central, to ensure that it was actually creating useful knowledge about our own subjectivities and therefore midwifing real transformation in our relations and social selves. However, this takes skill, sensitivity and courage in a time when these attributes need to be (re)developed in our relations.

This brings us on to the last condition in our trio, that of creating a safe space, this is the crux of the learning that would be needed to assist initiatives such as Occupy, as this is where it was reported that they failed. As has already been mentioned, it does seem that the SSC is potentially beginning to create a safe space in the act of attempting to resolve the tension between teachers and students and in internal and collective monitoring of their own actions and behaviours. It is possible to assert this because of the all-important emphasis on the reflective practices described, how that works in reality is difficult to say as I have not been privy to these sessions.

Neary (2011) and the Members of the SSC (2013) agree that the SSC has its roots in the "history of how those excluded from higher education have organized their own intellectual lives and learning in collaboration with university academics", another hint at the site of slippage, this time from the university to the SSC. Consequently, the pedagogy starts with forms of

subjugated knowledges and student experience, placing it firmly within the realm of popular education as defined in the introduction to this work. This potentially creates a safe space for expression in that “building pedagogy and knowledge on experience (student’s experiences) is regarded as one way to counter the claims of hegemonic truth” (Cho, 2013: 78), therefore making the pedagogy of the SSC explicitly political as it was in Occupy, but with the added time for reflection. In addition, as Castells (2012: 15) adds, “the more interactive and self-configurable communication is, the less hierarchical is the organisation and the more participatory is the movement”. This again, in principle, produces a safe space, because the communication in the SSC is characterised by democratic, non-hierarchical and power-sharing principles as discussed.

The curriculum of the SSC, described earlier, also lends itself to the creation of a safe, experimental and expressive space, as Shor (1996: 61) expounds from his experience, “questioning the status quo is an unpredictable adventure that interrupts routine behaviours, expectations, and relationships”. As this is a collaborative and personalised activity in the SSC, it brings us back to Castells (2012) assertion that togetherness is a fundamental psychological mechanism to overcome fear. In addition, as the curriculum asks learners the questions from Mill’s (1957/2000) book, whilst they are potentially ‘interrupting the routine behaviours, expectations, and relationships’, they may be connecting these interruptions to the larger questions concerning social change.

Castells (2012: 10) also remarks that social actors “need to build public space by creating free communities in the urban space”, as Occupy did.

“Since the institutional public space, the constitutionally designated space for deliberation, is occupied by the interests of dominant elites and their networks, social movements need to carve out a new public space.. [that].. makes itself visible in social life”. The SSC does this to an extent; there is very little pedagogy behind closed doors. The SSC not only attempts to resolve the tension between the hierarchies of student and teacher, it also attempt to foreclose on the hierarchy between private and public space by conducting its activities in public spaces.

As Neary (2011) states, “the SSC is grounded in forms of organisation that have arisen out of the development of the Social Centre network in the UK and around the world.” According to Pusey (2010: 176) social centres are “managed autonomous spaces.....they have their roots in the Italian *autonomia* and German *autonome* movements of the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the associated politics of autonomy and social struggle”. This description fits with the SSC as they are reportedly attempting to be politically autonomous and engaged in social struggle. As we heard from Winn (2010) at the beginning of this section, “courses run in existing public spaces”, Neary (2011) adds that “autonomous education is a critical response to the crisis of the university, involving an alliance between faculty and students in co-operative learning, forming an experimental space for an academic commons against the pedagogy of debt and enclosure”. This is supported by Pusey (2010: 177) as he insists that “many city centres are becoming increasingly dedicated to the further reproduction and circulation of capital through endless consumption....social centres represent an attempt to open up pockets of space that are dedicated to ‘people rather than profit’”. A founder member of the SSC explained, in an article in the *Times Higher*

Education Supplement that the centre needs to be “understood as ‘an active part of the city’ rather than a ‘discrete entity’” (Bonnett, 2013). Neary even goes as far as to say that the SSC could be seen as “reclaiming our ‘right to the city’, or ‘occupying’ the city as ‘a new pedagogy of space and time’” (Neary in *Class War University*, 2013), a large claim indeed. However, Hardt and Negri (2012: 6) might agree in classifying the SSC as a struggle for the common in the sense that they “contest the injustices of neoliberalism and, ultimately, the rule of private property” even if only in a small way. The Invisible Committee (2009: 58) state that “urban space is more than just the theatre of confrontation, it is also the means”; the SSC may have the potential to become such a confrontation with the mechanisms of power, should it grow and spread.

The self-monitoring and discussion on the weighty social issues of society’s malaise, coupled with their insistence on ‘reclaiming the right to the city’ as a learning agora potentially create from the SSC a crack in the capitalist infrastructure of enclosure and surveillance and, moreover, a potentially effective form of educational organisation for social transformation. Carrigan (2011) concurs with his description; “it’s a radical, optimistic and most of all practical attempt to discover alternative ways of teaching and learning within the present climate” and Bonnett (2013) explains, “as fun as the centre sounds, there is also a sense of urgency and anger that motivates these scholars and students. Resistance to government changes requires more than protest”.

Neary and Winn (2012: 13) describe the SSC as “being a new ‘institution of the common’ or ‘autonomous institutionality’”. Moreover, they do appear to

be intent on enacting what Rancière (1991: 39) insisted emancipated educators should do: “to give, not the key to knowledge, but the consciousness of what an intelligence can do when it considers itself equal to any other and considers any other equal to itself”. Of course this notion has massive implications for the notional roles in education: student; under/postgraduate; lecturer; professor. These roles are boundaries that currently imply that one intelligence is not equal to another and are perhaps the boundaries that need to be cracked in this context the most. But how, in what Schostak (personal communication) calls the ‘contemporary compliance machines known as universities’ is this to be done? In the final analysis of the SSC, whilst accepting the complexity and messiness of the reality of enacting the principles upon which the SSC is based, it does present a convincing argument, on paper at least, that it is indeed a crack in capitalism and resolves much of the tension it needs to, to become a revolutionary pedagogical space and an effective form of educational organisation that could, perhaps be mobile enough to set up in situations such as Occupy. This space also seems to have the potential to become useful in other ways to social movements, such as Occupy, alongside other popular education initiatives. These initiatives seem to require the assistance of those who have spent their lives becoming experts in fields that are essential to the understanding of how to elicit social change: sociologists, psychologists, linguists, political theorists and many others including the educational theorist, all of whom reside for the most part within academe, which is where the attention is now directed.

7.2 A Trip into corporatized Territory: The University of Lincoln and Student as Producer.

Entombed within [the new glass university buildings], breathing only the stale air of an 'academy' from which all critique and counter-culture has been virtually eradicated, are the proto-proletarians of a digitised, 'knowledge-based' capitalism

(Faulkner, 2011: 28)

The UK coalition government's funding reforms are a sustained attack on the idea of the university in England. Unless defended, that idea will die

(Couldry, 2011: 37)

The authors of the Student as Producer project at the University of Lincoln assert that the project is in political opposition to the dominant culture in higher education (HE); that of students as consuming subjects (Neary in Class War University, 2013; Williams, 2013). This particular model of higher education organisation serves the purposes here of illustrating a possible model that could possibly complete the trajectory explored here and be the turning place for the loop of learning from the streets to the academy – and back. However, the main difference to the other sites is that it enacts its oppositional politics within the confines of the university structure. Therefore I argue that different questions have to be asked of this project, in other words, the interrogation is not on the grounds of it being a grass roots or popular pedagogical movement, but as a 'crack from above'. In that respect, Student as Producer (SaP) reorganises its resistance from within and against, rather than beyond.

As a site of potential slippage, the project slips out of the control of the dominant culture in HE to a point, but what is essential is that it does so in a somewhat indistinguishable way when viewed from above, from the realm of policy (University of Lincoln, 2011-2012) and may therefore be subversive enough to create a new form of organisation. It does not use an overtly popular education, in this work's understanding of the term, and it does not call itself critical pedagogy, at least not aloud. The main premise as claimed by Student as Producer is that the student should become the (co-)producer of knowledge, not its consumer (Student as Producer, 2010), an uncomfortable premise in the literature couched in market discourses. This hypothetically turns the culture of the student as consuming subject on its head and expects that students are agentic beings and that knowledge that they co-produce alongside academic staff throughout their time at the University will form within them a different, counter-hegemonic relationship to issues surrounding knowledge, power and agency (In conversation with Neary, 2013). A noble sentiment, but imagine if the notion of 'co-produce' was to become co-think, co-imagine, co-create, co-critique, where could those terms lead us? Perhaps the corporatized world of UK higher education is not ready for that, so there is a need, perhaps, to think of SaP as a place to start?

What, then, needs asking of Student as Producer in order for it to become relevant to our task here of creating sites to support social change and countervailing discourses? If we are to understand ways in which we can garner forms of more popular education within academe, Student as Producer (SaP), I argue, as above, could be a good place to start. Therefore,

an understanding of how SaP attempts to encourage and nurture a counter culture with new social relations, if it does do this at all, is essential.

It could be argued that there are traits of popular education (University of Lincoln, 2011-2012) within SaP, but can the learning from Occupy and the SSC provide an insight, not only of how to create a deeper form of popular education within academe, but also to support popular education initiatives and social movements from within the university using the University of Lincoln's (UL) research-engaged teaching initiative? In addition, what can be learnt from the organising principles of SaP to allow a new form of educational organisation, perhaps even in existing HE institutions (HEIs), to be realised?

Crowther *et al.* (2005: 6) stress, "there is both the need and the potential to create opportunities and spaces for popular education in all aspects of academic work". So does the SaP initiative exploit this need and potential at UL? Much of their literature at least *suggests* it does, through the main aspect of the initiative: research-engaged teaching:

As well as being academically led, research engaged teaching suggests that the process of teaching and learning can be considered in an intellectual manner. This means designing teaching and learning activities that connect knowledge and human interests through a theoretical engagement with research, in a culture based on augmentation and critique (McLean, 2006 quoted in University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 4). In this way, it is possible to, 'deepen understanding of where problems might lie and what to do about them', in a series of professional academic conversations grounded in the principles of 'solidarity and reflection'" (McLean, 2006: 109 and 125, quoted in University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 4)

(University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 4)

These principles, 'solidarity and reflection' and the teaching and learning activities that 'connect knowledge and human interests', certainly seem to be a sound basis for creating a popular education, or a popular education support, within the University. There also seems to be a valid attempt at nurturing the creative imagination with the abandonment of learning outcomes, taking away the limiting effects of outcomes and replacing them with learning outputs (University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 14). Learning outcomes are seen by SaP as overly prescriptive and limiting to the creative potential of the students:

Learning outputs build on learning outcomes by recognising the importance of creativity and originality of student work. Learning outputs encourage students to develop their own critical insights and understandings through interactions with teachers. Learning outputs recognise the tensions and complexities....of the learning environment....learning outputs might include research reports, published papers, designed objects for exhibition, organisation of academic event, public performances, etc. a key aspect of learning outputs is that the nature of the output cannot be identified at the outset of the programme, introducing a degree of creativity, originality and uncertainty into the learning process.

This notion of introducing uncertainty, creativity and originality contains the possibility of enabling the learning subject to explore and examine the depths of their potential. It also should allow for that all-important aspect of critical pedagogy, not knowing, not being sure and accepting revision of knowledge:

The admission that we do not know is both a principle of knowledge and a principle of organisation that aims at the participation of all in the process of determining our individual and collective doing.

(Holloway, 2010: 256)

But perhaps more than that, they have the potential to form different social structures as creativity flourishes when we do not know in a safe place.

Knowing would lead to a different organisational structure, a structure of monologue with established leaders and institutions to hold them in place.

(Holloway, 2010: 256)

Holloway's words here suggest that the element of uncertainty, the not knowing the predetermined outcome may have the effect of fostering more collective, collaborative and inclusive organisations in the future. The notion that learning outputs cannot be identified at the beginning of the programme and are designed by the students, facilitated by the teachers connects the notion that "the world must be approached as an object to be understood and known by the efforts of the learners themselves. Moreover, their acts of knowing are to be stimulated and grounded in their own being, experiences, needs, circumstances, and destinies" (McLaren, 2000: 11) with the HE curriculum. It could be argued that it would be easy from this stance to introduce a more explicitly political engagement with the students in order to foster an overtly counter-hegemonic ethos to the institution as Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 121) describe:

teacher-scholars would have to explore and understand social, political and historical contexts of hegemony (Chomsky 1995) to be effective in counter-hegemonic pedagogy. Teachers are no longer the dominant voice in the classroom. Students are asked to become active learners, critical thinkers, non-passive and their voices are respected as constructive contributors. We collectively work to become a community of learners.

Most of the suggestions from Bahruth and Steiner are already claimed to be contained within the organisational ethos at UL, active learning, critical thinking and constructive contributing to the learning process. Nevertheless, as Neary (in conversation, 2013) told me they do not engage the students in

an explicitly political way, rather through the curriculum. This engagement through the curriculum could be construed as a 'gentler' way for students to come to their own decisions about change and hegemony: "The passion for learning must be kindled and nurtured in subtle ways so as not to drive students further from the intended purposes of education" (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000: 131). Cho (2013: 99) adds this:

students do not change just because they are told to change. Similarly, teachers do not change just because they encounter the 'truth'. Individuals change their moralities, values and behaviours when social structures are conducive to and can support such changes. The real task of critical pedagogy is to create the social structures that allow individuals to change and grow. Rather than focussing on reforming individuals per se, critical pedagogy should explore alternative visions of social structures and conditions, so that ordinary teachers and students can practice and experience a pedagogy of hope, love, equality and social justice.

It should also be remembered that students at UL do not enrol into a social movement for change, they want a university degree. Therefore, this nurturing of a counter-hegemonic pedagogy, *within an alternative structure*, should encourage at least thinking otherwise, and through the SaP project, asks students to go out and engage with real world problems through the research engaged ethos. This gentle curriculum engagement is perhaps what is needed to create the safe space that was missing in Occupy on a much larger scale if adopted throughout HE, or to extend the co-operative, collaborative and democratic values of the SSC. It is difficult, however, when as Couldry (2011: 37) states, "the UK coalition government's funding reforms are a sustained attack on the idea of the university in England. Unless defended, that idea will die", to be patient and to understand on a practical level, that institutional and cultural change take time.

What is perhaps most interesting about SaP is that as Neary (University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 3) attests, the “initiative has received enthusiastic support from staff and students across the university, as well as some critical responses”. He adds, “the point is not that everyone agrees with the principle of research-engaged teaching, but that the university engages in an intellectual discussion about the nature of teaching and learning and its relationship to research at UL, in a progressive and collegiate manner”. This should have the effect of ensuring that the SaP initiative becomes “not a template on which academics are being asked to base their pedagogical activities, but a starting point to generate a fundamental debate about how we teach”. UL (University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 6) accept that research engaged teaching and learning “is becoming increasingly prevalent in universities”, however, what apparently makes UL different is that “no one university has sought to implement it across the whole of its teaching and learning provision”. According to them “it is this ambition to adopt research engaged teaching and learning as the organising principle for linking research and teaching across UL that is the really significant aspect of this initiative”. One could argue that it is not only making this way of teaching and learning the organising principle that is really significant, but also that it is posited as ‘a starting point to generate a fundamental debate about how we teach’. This seems indeed to be what Cho (2013: 122) might call “Utopian pedagogy” which she describes as “a broad idea to help us pursue alternative thinking and models, beyond what seems common and feasible”. For the whole university to attempt to disengage with the dominant culture at a time when UK universities are under attack at their very foundations from an ideological government (Bailey, 2011; Couldry, 2011; Roggero, 2011;

Neary, 2012; Walton, 2011; Williams, 2013) is indeed beyond what most people would consider 'common and feasible'. However, it is important to remember, "marginalised alternatives remain virtually unknown and are rarely debated" (Milojevic, 2006: 26), and it is therefore the job of politically motivated researchers in HE to examine these alternatives. SaP looks like an exercise in subversive prefiguration because as Neary (in conversation, 2013) told me "we are doing what we can under the current hegemony, but the important thing is that we are just doing it, and so far, it's going well, it's a messy reality, but we have a great deal of buy-in from all over the university – including, most importantly, the students". The notion that the students are expressing this 'buy-in' is vital for the understanding of SaP as part of the trajectory for popular education, because without the 'buy-in from the students the trajectory would not work.

The project carries with it the notion of choice, Newman (2005: 30) argues that "popular education is about teaching choice, about helping ourselves and others understand that we do have choices, and about helping ourselves and others develop the necessary capabilities to make those choices". The way the teaching and learning is organised, according to UL's SaP 'key aspects' document suggests that choice making is built in as students are in

an environment in which learning is driven by a process of enquiry owned by the student...Starting with a 'scenario' and with the guidance of a facilitator, students identify their own issues and questions....Students examine the resources they need to research the topic, provided as part of Learning Development@Lincoln, thereby acquiring the requisite knowledge.

(Student as Producer, 2010).

It is this connection with 'real problems' of their own identification, investigated with the 'guidance of a facilitator' that suggests that SaP could be of great assistance not only to movements such as Occupy, but also to creating social change in general, should students attention be engaged in specific, politically orientated ways. Bailey (2011: 98) asserts that what is needed is

striking a judicious balance between education as the acquisition of objective knowledge and education as helping students realise their full potential for the greater good. Conceived in this way, education is of crucial importance for the fostering of a social consciousness, socio-cultural exchange and the gradual strengthening of the democratic process.

SaP seems to strike this balance when judged on its literary output,

the essential aspects of research-engaged teaching and learning is that it involves a more research orientated style of teaching, where students learn about research processes, and where the curriculum emphasises the ways by which knowledge is produced, rather than learning knowledge that has already been discovered

(University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 5)

Understanding the way in which knowledge is produced is, it can be argued, of crucial importance for fostering social consciousness, for as Brookfield (2001: 5) once again corroborates, "critical thinkers are actively engaged in life. They see themselves as creating and re-creating aspects of their personal, workplace and political lives. They appreciate creativity, they are innovators, and they exude a sense that life is full of possibilities". The argument here is that this attitude cannot but help strengthen a just and democratic society exponentially. In addition, this research-orientated style of teaching not only has the potential to allow the students agency in their own knowledge production activities but also assumes an equality of intelligence,

if not skills and knowledge, that Rancière posited was essential for ‘universal teaching’. Moreover, Illich (2011: 39) contends, “learning is the human activity which needs the least manipulation by others. ... [learning is] the result of unhampered participation in a meaningful setting. Most people learn best by being ‘with it’,” this seems to be the aim of SaP; to create, through research engaged teaching and learning, a form of experiential learning reminiscent of Dewey’s laboratory school (Dewey, 1965). Whilst Tent City University did a great deal for raising the critical awareness of the people involved in Occupy London, SaP has the potential to allow learners to rework social relationships more generally through this form of research engaged teaching and learning whilst reaching a mass audience. To be involved in research is to be involved in critically analysing social relationships, from whatever disciplinary lens you use to look, as all involve a literature review. This suggests that education, especially when connected to real world research problems, is an appropriate organisational form to prefigure, intellectually and practically, what is needed to re-make social relations.

This form of prefigurative intellectual work is particularly pertinent when the research engagement takes the form of action research, creating living knowledges that in the arena of the HE classroom and the collaborating organisation, can be worked, analysed and reworked. This, I argue, is the potential of the SaP pedagogical methodology. As Borg and Mayo (2007: x) insist, “it is through multi-levelled, dialogical encounters, firmly rooted in the day to day struggles, and communicated in accessible languages, that oppressions can be named, shamed and eventually, tackled”. Suppose then, that the collaborating groups or organisations were social movements, or popular education initiatives. Learners, through the pedagogical methods of

the SaP, would now be able to be instrumental to creating research action cycles with these groups, thus having the potential to improve their efficacy by creating a praxis of theory and action that allows the action to be done by those on the ground and the theory to be injected into that action by the learners and academics practicing the SaP ethos.

What then, is the philosophy behind SaP, why has this initiative been implemented now? Neary felt that

knowledge had now become a key commodity in the process of valorisation, and the university a key site of production of commodified knowledge. Any sense of knowledge being produced for common good, or that academic work requires open networks of collaboration was now being enclosed behind intellectual property laws, student debt, budget cuts, knowledge transfers, marketization and privatisation. The valorisation of knowledge had produced a new regime of accumulation; cognitive capitalism

(Neary, 2012: 241).

This view suggests that academe has at least one of the same problems as those experienced by Occupy, the impingement of their right to commons. Darder (2002: 11) echoes the sentiment, “the forces of the marketplace and the interests of the corporations also drive educational rhetoric and classroom curricula”. Walton (2011: 20) maps this trend from thirty years of neoliberal history, “the dominant ideology under Blair as under Thatcher (and Major), was an almost religious faith in markets and competition which paid no heed to the existing wealth of understanding and experience in academe and took as its sole aim the materialist goals of preparing students for the corporate labour market”. This is good for neither students nor academics as Crowther *et al.* (2005: 4) testify, “the contemporary academy – certainly in the rich world – is a hotbed of market ideology orchestrated by the dictates of the new managerialism. In the era of academic capitalism university

knowledge has become a commodity, and the successful academic is now a trader in the educational market place". Freedman (2011: 10) agrees with Neary, UL and SaP when he says, "we... have [a] responsibility, to defend the idea of university education as a public good that is reducible neither to market values nor to instrumental reasoning". Cavanagh (in Borg & Mayo, 2007: 46) insists that "the mainstreaming of popular education could ... be a part of creating a more just society. But we cannot be naïve about this. We must be vigilant to ensure that the ethics of justice and compassion and love remain vital within popular education". It should be remembered however, that SaP is implemented within the confines of UL, students still pay high fees to attend and it could not escape the enclosure of some of the language of the market being adopted in their own literature:

Student as Producer supports the career preparation and aspirations of students, in the form of a traditional route into the professions, working within an SME, creating a new start business, employment within the growing third sector or going on to further study. Student as Producer maintains that research-engaged teaching and learning is more likely to result in graduates who are better prepared to cope with a globalised labour market which is characterised by ever-changing technology and working practices

(Student as Producer, 2010)

This language is a warning that we must "avoid romanticising situations that capture our imagination and offer much hope" (Borg & Mayo, 2007: xi).

However, this should not denigrate the initiative, as mentioned earlier, SaP is meant not only as a reorganisation of the university, but also as a starting point for a conversation about how we teach and learn. SaP has to be subversive and adopt the language of market driven policy in order to survive the gaze of the boundary policing authorities mentioned earlier. However, its literature betrays its apparent commitment to dominant ideology with extracts

such as “the emphasis on the Student Voice*allowing for the space of dissensus and disagreement, driven by engaged and participatory pedagogies*” (Student as Producer, 2010, my italics). Student Voice in dominant ideology is about the voice of the consumer, as Williams (2013: 8) explains:

it is argued that the operation of consumer choice within a marketised HE sector will drive up standards, and therefore the student as consumer is a positive force: the ‘good’ student will exercise consumer choice and ‘drive up the quality’ of HE for others. Such assumptions may suggest that HE is a commodity designed to be packaged and consumed, and that it has an inherent financial value which can, once purchased, be traded in in the post-graduate labour market.

However, Williams (2013: 10) also argues, “in treating students as consumers needing to be satisfied, universities can play a role in infantilising students through reducing intellectual challenge to the completion of modules and replacing academic relationships with customer care contracts”. UL manage, in principle, to avoid this infantilising - despite students being in the same financial position and therefore positioned as ‘customers’ here as anywhere else – by assuring that “Student as Producer promotes the involvement and engagement of students in the design and delivery of modules and programmes” (University of Lincoln, 2012: 5). Again, we see this aspect of choice and agency, so when, as Giroux (2001: xxii) says, “the only form of citizenship increasingly being offered to young people is consumerism”, UL through the SaP initiative claim to be offering agency, choice and control over their own learning. We therefore see potential for a strong defence of the notion of the university as a public good, ready and primed to be radicalised into a political project par excellence. Crowther *et al.* (2005: 1) insist that “the radicalisation of intellectual work.....is an important,

necessary and urgent task.....at a time when universities are being drawn inexorably away from social and political engagement”. This is well supported by Neary and Amsler’s (2012: 122) insistence that SaP gives students “the sense that they are part of creating the future – as subjects/makers rather than objects/victims of history” this effect, they claim, occurs during their time at university and when students leave. Although without engaging the student politically as Neary insisted they did not, it is unclear how, exactly students come to see themselves this way. These points give a clear understanding that SaP is, as Neary and Amsler (p: 124) insist, “set firmly ‘within and against’ the idea of the university as a neoliberal institution”. These points also clearly support Freedman’s (2011: 10) notion that the university should be “a public service, a social entitlement, a space for critical thinking and a place of discovery”, which are reminiscent of what TCU was for Occupy, and indeed the SSC is and therefore links can be built between the different sites.

7.3 Linking the potential of the sites

If indeed, Neary’s (2012: 234) suggestion that “at the very most, teaching politically can be used to reinvent higher education as a revolutionary political project” is to be used as a linkage point, assertions can begin to be made about the potential of SaP to use the learning from Occupy and the SSC to build on the initiative and create a popular-based education within, against and beyond academe. For example, as suggested earlier in this work and supported here by Crowther *et al.* (2005: 1), “university based teachers and researchers use their work to support popular struggles for greater

democracy, equality and social justice – and to do so at a time when all the demands being made upon them are, seemingly, towards institutional disengagement from social and political action”. SaP seems to begin to do this at a time when, as Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 119) suggest, “students have learned to respond to the expectations of the teacher: parroting, memorising, and regurgitating from a series of facts and official bodies of knowledge promoted by the mainstream cannon”. SaP circumvents “the resulting ‘stupidification’ (Macedo 1993)” and “demands a counter-hegemonic pedagogy” (ibid). SaP has the potential not only to create academics who may as Crowther *et al.* suggested ‘use their work to support popular movements’, but who may also see their work as part of an emergent popular movement to re-engage students in HE. This potential arises because of tenets such as these:

Research-based learning includes:Design of learning activities based on authentic research problems in the public domain that involve engagement with the wider community.

(Student as Producer, 2010)

The understanding, or making intellectual and practical connections between, such issues as frontiers of disciplines, research methodologies, authentic research problems and engagement with the wider community, suggest that SaP has indeed got the potential to create a popular education within the university, but not only that. SaP has the potential to support social movements and grass roots popular education, such as Occupy by researching them throughout the curriculum. Newman (2005: 28) says, “critical learning is a political act. It helps us see through ourselves and so become better at seeing through others. It makes us much less susceptible

to hegemonic control”, thus enabling learners to research movements beyond hegemonic conceptions of activism and without the elitist attitude that some HE institutions pass on to their graduates. This is substantiated by Couldry (2011: 44) who insists that, in the face of the neoliberalisation of the university, “the best response (perhaps obvious, but the obvious needs saying in the face of a neoliberal culture that grows by not allowing certain types of ‘obvious’ to be said) is to build a counter-culture within the English university, a culture and a life which embeds a counter-rationality into neoliberalism”. This counter-rationality is evident in the work being done by some at UL around militant co-research; “from the position of militant/co-research and self-education the political subjectivity of the author is not regarded as detrimental to the research process, but is the essential objective reality out of which the research is derived” (Neary, 2012: 234). This position in militant/co-research (see Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007) is built into the SaP initiative as a central point, it is however, understandably not mentioned as militant/co-research on UL literature, but is there:

A definition of research-engaged teaching and learning might be: ‘a fundamental principle of curriculum design, where students learn primarily by engagement in real research projects, or projects which replicate the process of research in their discipline. Engagement is created through active collaboration amongst and between students and academics, underpinned by the effective use of information resources

(University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 6)

And:

Student as Producer....strongly promotes the use of Creative Commons licenses, as well as other ways of making publically and openly accessible the intellectual products that are developed at UL

(University of Lincoln, 2011-2012: 15)

These extracts can be argued as having traits of what Neary and Amsler (2012: 107) call 'occupying the curriculum': "we consider here how attempts to occupy the university curriculum, not as a programme of education but as the production of critical knowledge, may also constitute 'a new pedagogy of space and time'". This new pedagogy of space and time, also mentioned earlier in the context of Occupy, is an interesting concept and connects with Crowther *et al.*'s (2005: 6) insistence that within popular education "pedagogy is a matter of principle and purpose rather than mere technique. Methods of teaching and learning must therefore be developed and deployed in ways which enable the teacher to learn and the learner to teach".

Research engaged teaching and learning does this, as Faulkner (2011: 28) argues, "it unites practice and theory, skills and critique, the knowledge to do things with an understanding of purpose and consequence". In addition, Neary and Amsler (2012: 122) insist that we wonder "what are the spatial learning landscapes within which teaching is set: at the geographical level of the classroom, the campus and beyond: but also as a horizontal space within which collaborations can multiply". Collini (2012: 91) maintains, "the governing purpose [of the university] involves extending human understanding through open-ended enquiry". Neary and Amsler (2012: 109) extend this purpose by explaining that "in practical terms, this means that 'education' cannot be separated from 'life' in institutions, and that thinking about education cannot be separated from the spaces and times in which we produce knowledge – which in this formulation, are potentially everywhere and always". This idea of the spaces we produce knowledge – or learn – being 'potentially everywhere and always', ties SaP, the SSC and Occupy together in a continuum of knowledge production sites, thus presenting the

opportunity for imagining that they could be connected in a plethora of other ways. This, coupled with the notion of co-production of knowledge, creates the condition wherein, as Neary & Winn (2012: 12) state, “students and academics [are] working together as a form of political praxis, so that the production of knowledge becomes a key principle of self-organisation and radical subjectivity (Roggero, 2011). And in the middle of all this the concept of the ‘common’ is re-established”. Therefore, if SaP currently re-establishes a form of academic commons, there seems to be little reason why that commons cannot extend outwards from the confines of the university to encompass social movements, alternative education provision (such as the SSC) and community groups, all involved in a form of political praxis, creating new, extended radical subjectivities. This reiterates Neary’s notion from the last section that the SSC and SaP are two ends of the same project to dissolve the neoliberal university (Neary & Amsler, 2012: 124) and reconstitute education as another form of ‘social knowing’ (Neary & Hagyard, 2011). Neary and Amsler (2012: 121) take the connections between all the sites further and insist that “like Occupy, Student as Producer is an anti-curriculum, whose substance is not simply teaching and learning but the production of knowledge as a revolutionary political project”. Williams (2013: 5) agrees and argues for a form of radical dissolution of the university structure: “I argue for students to be considered as active participants in their education, who have the potential to become the intellectual equals of their lecturers and make a contribution to society’s knowledge and understanding of the world”.

To connect SaP to the pedagogical verities in our grounded theory exploration, SaP connects very much with the democratic power sharing

pedagogy espoused by Shor (1996). So much so that this extract from Shor (p. 56) could almost be included verbatim in their next report:

in the critical pedagogy I have been defining here and elsewhere, teachers don't stop being authorities or academic experts, but they deploy their power and knowledge as democratic authorities who question the status quo and negotiate the curriculum rather than as authoritarian educators who unilaterally make the rules and lecture on pre-set subject matters.

It is at this point, then, that I will turn to the lines of continuity (Holloway, 2010) between the three sites. In the face of it, the connections between the sites in this work may seem spurious, particularly between Occupy and the University of Lincoln, but as already discussed, albeit tentatively, there are connections. It is time now to make those lines explicit, and create a solidaristic movement between them – to join the cracks.

Chapter Eight - Lines of continuity: drawing out the possibilities, bringing in the bricolage

What is important is not to draw dividing lines, but see the lines of continuity.

(Holloway, 2010: 25)

This chapter will argue that there is the potential to build strong connections for promoting voice, equality and democracy in the current socio-political juncture and will ask questions about possible ways forward. Thinking through Bricolage is activated here to allow for the role of the imagination as to what might be and how it might be constituted. This chapter will attempt to uncover and identify what Cho (2013: 78) calls a “world of alternative values and practices” in the sites. Connections between the sites that indicate attempts at providing this world will be explored through the themes of story and experience; occupation and reclamation; and conscientization. The chapter will then continue on to argue that, at the current moment, there may well be a need for forms of organisation that have clear pedagogical direction accompanied by strong and collective procedures and mechanisms that are able, and encouraged, to subvert and constrain any emergent vanguards in order to eventually dispense with current forms and create a more organic, non-hierarchical and fluid form of education.

It is here that I will discuss whether the connections that are uncovered between the sites could constitute a learning loop which can cycle as a form of praxis, creating the proposed ‘grand action research cycle’.

Cowden and Singh (2013: 3) describe the current political and educational problems, including the commodification of the university and the further standardisation of schooling, as “a crisis of thinking, feeling and doing” and insist, “it is crucial to understand the wider linkages”. Therefore, linking these attempts at restructuring, through a solidaristic cycle of praxis becomes paramount so that educators might be ready to ensure the ‘crisis of thinking, feeling and doing’ does not become pervasive throughout education and indeed society.

As mentioned above, running throughout this chapter and the sites explored are the somewhat contentious themes of occupation and reclamation (of space, of cities, of the intellectual subject, the heart and the mind), and experience and conscientization (of the individual, the collective and the human as political animal). I argue that it is through this bricolage, or juxtaposition of themes – Kincheloe *et al* (2011: 164) state that critical theory should not be treated as a universal grammar of revolutionary thought objectified and reduced to discrete formulaic pronouncements - that the strongest lines of continuity of practice and solidarity for a potentially revolutionary pedagogy of escape can be seen through this strategy. It is here, then, that those imaginative elements of the bricolage, of thinking beyond what exists and seeing the world that exists not yet, are employed.

It is thought necessary here to tie together the three sites explored throughout the thesis in order, not to assimilate or indoctrinate each other, but to create a dialogue through their juxtaposition to disquiet tensions, to assist each other to grow, to become more and to uncover the possible imaginative resolutions to the crisis described above by Cowden and Singh.

8.1 Story and Experience

Cho (2013: 78) states that “the voices of those who are marginalised can/do provide ‘evidence for a world of alternative values and practices whose experience gives the lie to hegemonic constructions of social worlds’ (Scott, 1992: 24)”, making these stories from the margins important for escaping the enclosure of the TINA (there is no alternative) syndrome. Ollis (2012: 213) adds fuel to this notion by insisting that “adult learners are rich sites of knowledge... their capacity to take on new knowledge is dynamic because they are agentic”, especially, it is argued here, when educational activity takes place in conducive and insurgent settings. Thinking about this has been assisted by the use of bricolage which has allowed education to be uncovered beyond its usual confinements in formal institutions and community halls, this has been attempted through the leaving behind of the traditional discourses on education that reside mainly in the revision of schooling. Seeing through the bricolage lens has allowed a view of the pedagogical Other and an understanding of experience as pedagogy and social action as an educational institution. Perhaps the stories from the fieldwork sites assert that the notion of activist needs redefining to encompass all learners who are beginning to ‘occupy’ their minds, it is this and the public performance in the fieldwork sites of other social relations that makes the pedagogy activism in and of itself.

The role of experience and storytelling is of particular significance in both bricolage and HE. In bricolage story telling can be thought of as a bricolage

form in itself; the telling of experience provides a feedback loop between speaker and listener, in this case researcher and researched. As Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 130) insist, “feedback looping purposely works to evoke imaginary, virtual spaces; that is spaces that are packed with infinite possibilities to create new realities that are inclusive, diverse, socially just, equitable and respectful of agency and democratic, equal participation”, the purpose of the mutually useful conversations discussed in Chapter Four, section 4.3. In HE, through this notion of the feedback loop seen as a bricolage essential for creating these new realities, connections with activist groups and ordinary people can ground what happens in the academy. For example, in research carried out by Johnston (2005: 71) one academic

specifically stressed her involvement with a young anarchist group as a ‘wake-up call’, a challenge to our assumptions as educators, demonstrating a ‘need to reinvigorate ourselves from time to time staying in touch with new ideas’

The specific stress on this involvement suggests that the power of this involvement created this lens to see this feedback loop spoken of by Kincheloe and Berry. Therefore, I would argue there is evidence that the university can benefit from involving itself with activists who engage in the sharing of experience. This involvement is an opening up of new spaces, new feedback loops, new bricolages. These can lead to the mutually useful conversations that are a practice of the bricolage, allowing both the researcher and the researched to de-construct common sense notions, the taken for granted. Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 171) say that in bricolage “we are looking at the degree to which research moves those it studies to understand the world and the way it is shaped in order for them to transform it”, but perhaps more is happening, perhaps this involvement helps in the

researcher's own conscientization, opening up, through the practice of bricolage, in both researcher and researched new places to be reoccupied by our conscientised selves. These are bricolaged connections where the collective action of expelling the elites from our world views enable a new form of occupation; that of ourselves.

8.2 Occupation

Brown (2012: 56) argues, "the target of occupation is no longer just physical spaces or objects, but everything, everywhere – including ourselves to begin with". Of particular interest here is the burgeoning movement to 'occupy the curriculum' in higher education and learning, and as Bigelow (2011) reiterates, "we don't need to take tents and sleeping bags to our town squares to participate ... we can also "occupy" our classrooms, "occupy" the curriculum, and then collect the stories about what we have done". Neary and Amsler (2012: 114) agree, "we are particularly interested in the possibility ... of appropriating the social space and time of education in ways to enable us to articulate what, how and why people learn". This is the basis of occupation in this work: that people occupy the *space and time of the event*. Otherwise, as Shantz (2013: 14) says, "the thrill of immediacy of the street eruptions quickly subsides, leaving little of real gain in its wake". Occupy may feel like this to many, but from a popular, critical pedagogical point of view, the energy that was spent there could be recouped and be learnt from. Holloway (2010: 30-1) explains the notion of capturing these 'happenings', these street explosions like this:

Often such explosions are seen as failures because they do not lead to permanent change, but this is wrong: they have a validity of their own, independent of the long-term consequences. Like a flash of lightening, they illuminate a different world, ... the impression that remains on our brain and in our senses is that of an image of the world we can (and did) create. The world that does not yet exist displays itself as a world that exists not-yet.

This world that exists not-yet in the case of Occupy is one of relations attended to otherwise, experimental democracy and, of particular interest here, open education (Neary & Winn, 2012), politically charged education in a place where the agora is reclaimed; reclaimed through filling the empty place of power with discussion, creativity and liberated desires to commune. These practices, thus far limited, need to be extended if the social world is to escape from enclosure.

This world that exists not-yet could possibly become the new space of occupation. If this is so then, as stated earlier, Merrifield (2011: 133) has a point when he asserts that

we need another zone of indistinguishability, another space of slippage, a space in which there's a lot of spontaneous energy as well as a few signs indicating where to go and what time the action begins. We need a new space of slippage in which we can organise and strategize, act without self-consciously performing, encounter others without walls, and hatch en masse a daring Great Escape from capitalism.

Therefore, it is argued that occupation can be viewed as a less public or explicit transgressive act, as well as an overt, physical act. The sites explored here and the future imagined sites, transgress to varying degrees, the normative rules in education and instead attempt to occupy the creative imaginations of those who wander/wonder in. However, as Foust (2010: 3)

states, “transgressive actions incite reactions due to their relationship to norms: Transgressions violate unspoken or explicit rules that maintain a particular social order. Yet, as scholars and practitioners have figured it, transgression’s threat to social order runs deeper than violating the rules and expectations that govern what is normal”. The occupation of our newly emancipated selves through a practice of bricolage also transgress those unspoken and explicit rules and indeed, bricolage’s threat to the normative order of social research runs deeper than violating the rules and expectations that govern what is normal. Bricolage has deep potential power, the power to critically awaken those who practice it and those they practice with. The transgression of the elitism of positivistic research paradigms, and even some more liberal ways of thinking about social research, mean that individuals can reclaim their occupied selves because bricolage can have a “catalytic validity” which can have a “reality-altering impact of the inquiry process and directs this impact so that those under study will gain self-understanding and self-direction” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 171).

8.3 Reclamation

It can be argued that when individuals occupy, their task is then to reclaim. Bricolage can help with this reclamation, as suggested above; as “in this complex ontological view, bricoleurs understand that social structures do not *determine* individual subjectivity but *constrain* it in remarkably intricate ways” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 171). Therefore, reclaiming the determination of subjectivity from those constraints takes an alternative way of thinking about social structures, with which bricolage can help.

Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 2) insist that the individual “political will to imagine much beyond the present seems hardly to exist. And the idea of utopia or the value of utopian thinking is easily dismissed as idle and silly. ...Nothing like an alternative to global capitalism seems remotely possible”. However, in Occupy individuals attempted to begin the collective task of finding the solidarity required to find the will to escape from their ordinary lives and to find others to work with; in the SSC the pedagogical project has the *potential* to create a greater awareness of how to dream, how to use utopian thought, to find an alternative; and in the SaP project, the *potential* is there to create an organisational structure that can support the theorising and the building of such alternatives: As Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 169) insist “a basic dimension of an evolving criticality involves a comfort with the existence of alternative ways of analysing and producing knowledge”. Therefore, it could be argued that these three sites are already practicing elements of bricolage in their day-to-day business. This can be argued as, when seeing through the lens of bricolage, Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 15) tell us that the bricoleur is “not aware of where the empirical ends and the philosophical begins, because such epistemological features are always embedded in one another”, in the context of this thesis, it is argued that the as yet unseen potential is no less important than the empirical evidence.

If the mass schooling and therefore enclosure and dulling of our creative imaginations is to be challenged, then the assertion of the right to freely associate, to assemble, to imagine and to produce our own knowledge, here seen as education, should be reclaimed. As we heard earlier from Foust (2010: 3) “transgressions that are permitted or escape the notice and discipline of boundary-policing authorities, push the boundaries further”,

therefore, what is acceptable tomorrow will be *different* to what is acceptable today. In the case of SaP and the SSC, I would argue that if they were able to escape the ‘notice of the boundary policing authorities’ they could become accepted and normative practices, but only if they are celebrated for their reclamation of thought, imagination and a popular curriculum.

However, due to the full enclosure of all spheres of social life (Shantz, 2012) and the notion that ‘the political will to imagine much beyond the present seems hardly to exist’, the first urgent reclamation can be argued to be that of *ourselves*. I argue that it is true, as von Kotze (2012: 109) says, that “creative collective experiences can help break through from seeing others as barriers rather than essential allies and make conscious the potential of solidarity in action”. This entails reclaiming sociality: reclaiming what is common to us all, creating, in other words, commons. According to Dyer-Witheford (2010: 106), “the notion of the commons presupposes collectivities – associations and assemblies – within which sharing is organised”. Shantz (2013: 19) adds to this “in commonism we re-appropriate our own productive power, taking it back as our own”. Therefore, an educational philosophy that enhances the reclamation of sociality seems essential for initiating the process.

8.4 Conscientization

Neary and Amsler (2012: 132) say that: “the essential aspect of critical practical reflexivity is that it questions the validity of its own concepts, which it does by recognising itself as inhering in the practical social world emerging out of, and inseparable from, the society it is attempting to understand”. This

type of reflexivity is a practice of bricolage and should be emergent from authenticity of the human experience, Freire (1998: 31-2) understood that “when we live our lives with the authenticity demanded by the practice of teaching that is also learning, we are participating in a total experience that is simultaneously directive, political, ideological, gnostic, pedagogical, aesthetic and ethical”. In this work, it is this collective experience, through both communing and the practice of bricolage, of questioning the validity of our own concepts, which brings us into a state of conscientization. The prefigurative, and therefore intensely pedagogical, nature of Occupy makes this questioning inevitable. This prefigurative nature is echoed in the practice and lenses of bricolage as the laying out of a set of fixed characteristics is contrary to the desire of the bricoleur (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011), bricolage prefigures not only a new social vision through its practices, but also a new research paradigm through its use of eclectic methods and discourses. “Popular educators/activists in social movements would say radical interventions happen through the concerted, purposive building of critical consciousness, through analysing power relations, through fashioning a constantly vigilant attitude” (von Kotze, 2012: 104), this is reminiscent of the rhetoric from both the SSC and SaP and the aims of bricolage. Neary and Amsler (2012: 113) report that Occupy “asserted that because it was primarily an idea or collectivised sense of agency, it could never be ‘evicted’ from social relations”, and so once the idea of conscientization is planted and exercised, it becomes part of the emergent and flourishing social relations and part of a potential new era of research.

8.5 Creating a dialogue between the pedagogies: finding the trajectory

Ollis (2012: 8) argues that “all activism, in fact all politicisation, is an invitation to learning. To be politicised is to learn”. Here I would turn that argument on its head and assert that all learning is (should be) politicisation, in fact, all learning (including research) is (should be) activism. It is from this premise that I will attempt to construct an interruptive cycle from the sites.

Newman (2005: 22) insists “to practice popular education ... we need to form an understanding of action, identify the kinds of action open to us, and consider the implications of engaging in each kind”. However, not every kind of action is open to everyone and, I assert, it need not be.

Each of the sites is considered here a form of activism, a form of reflection, a form of prefiguration and a form of knowledge (co)production. The potential cycle between them can be constructed from this view, through a lens of bricolage that sees process rather than fixity, which sees the political alongside the pedagogical, can see a bricolaging of a form of pedagogical activism that extends to the trajectory I now wish to explore. As Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 169) state, “the bricolage hopes to contribute to an evolving criticality”.

However, the first task is to answer some questions as follows: who has the time, space and inclination to apply the learning from the knowledge generated? Who is in a position to take up any new theory that has been produced from these activities and turn it into a sustainable project of experimentation and implementation? In addition, who can set up new ways of doing interruptive activism based on the activities of the rest? The

answers to these questions are for each individual to decide and reflect upon at different times in their own lives and a bricolage of experience may be built up as each individual travels through these roles for “the bricolage is dedicated to a form of rigour that is conversant with numerous modes of meaning making and knowledge production – modes that originate in diverse social locations” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 169).

However, there are some constants: academic researchers are in a position to record, reflect upon and theorise what is happening; organisations such as the SSC are positioned to take the learning and implement it in ever increasingly sustainable ways; those we currently identify as social movements are in a position to take the theories and apply them as new forms of interruptive activism.

The argument follows that we must find each other, dialogue and create, thus creating networks of solidarity, feedback loops of the learning that are needed to enclose the enclosers, to escape from the fatalism of the neoliberal agenda.

Ollis (2012: 9) says of theory that it can “help you find your voice; it can help you to understand inequality and hegemony. Theory can also provide insight into what needs to be challenged and changed”. Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 169) add to this that “a basic dimension of an evolving criticality involves a comfort with the existence of alternative ways of analysing and producing knowledge”, therefore, bricolage also helps you to ‘find your voice’, as Ollis puts it, by not only examining theory, but also producing it through a comfort with alternative ways of coming to know. Therefore, if the attention of the SaP initiative, wherever possible, were to be directed at scenarios where

there was a goal of social change - for example, Occupy - then new knowledges, theories and even epistemologies could be (co)produced; studying differences, begins an understand of how “dominant power operates to exclude and certify particular forms of knowledge production and why...we gain new appreciations of how power tacitly shapes what we know and how we came to know it” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170). This production could become fully co-production, without the need for bracketing any contribution. The co-production would include not only the students and academics in the university, but also the activists carrying out the projects. This is not a new idea, I know, however, these new theories, these tales, ideas and philosophies could then be fed through an organisation such as the SSC: open, democratic and inclusive, where anyone could openly study them in order to exploit their explanations of the world to the ends of improving actions for transformation. This can be argued to be employing bricolage because it recognises that process sensitive scholars recognise “all observers view an object of inquiry from their own vantage points... no portrait of social phenomenon is ever exactly the same as another. Because all physical, social, cultural, psychological and educational dynamics are connected in a larger fabric, researchers will produce different descriptions of an object of inquiry depending on what part of the fabric they have focussed on” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170). If the SSC model spread to more sites: who carefully challenged ideologies not compatible with equality and social justice, used as teaching points culturally hegemonic behaviours, discussed as a central tenet the dynamics of its members in a non-threatening way, then activists and academics alike may find these spaces places to reflect upon the theories produced by academics about the actions of the activists.

This enables, as Kincheloe *et al* (2011: 170) suggest, that “everyone leaves the table informed by the dialogue in a way that idiosyncratically influences the research methods they subsequently employ. The point of the interaction is not standardised agreement as to some reductionist notion of the ‘proper interdisciplinary method’ but awareness of the diverse tools in the researcher’s toolbox”. Through this lens, they come to understand that

in social research, the relationship between individuals and their contexts is a central dynamic to be investigated. This relationship is a key ontological and epistemological concern of the bricolage; it is a connection that shapes the identities of human beings and the nature of the complex social fabric.....Recognising the complex ontological importance of relationships alters the basic foundations of the research act and knowledge production process. Thin reductionist descriptions of things-in-themselves are no longer sufficient in critical research

(Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170)

This is how the grand cycle of action research could conceivably come about, producing in its wake a wave of countervailing discourses about the transformation of social life where a multitude of democratic voices could be heard.

If indeed the relations between activists and academics were to change to become equals in the same struggle, understanding what the limitations are for each other, the insider/outsider dichotomy presented in the Occupy Research Collective discussed in Chapters Four and Six would become redundant. This is where the need to reassess the nature and practice of research plays a role, seeing research through the lens of the bricolage methodology assists in this reassessment as “bricoleurs act on the concept that theory is not an explanation of nature – it is more an explanation to our relationship to nature” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 168). Roggero (2011: 5) says

that “co-research questions the borders between research and politics, knowledge and conflicts, university and social context, work and militancy” and it is these borders that, I would argue, not only need to be questioned, but to be redefined if learning loops and feedback systems are to be produced. These are, indeed, it is argued, a bricolage of learning spaces and their borders can be seen as shifting, fluid or even disintegrating when viewed through a bricolage lens, their individual, discipline bound epistemologies informing each other and building a cohesive and complex view of the social world. Shantz (2013: 1) insists, “in the period of crisis and opportunity, movements of the global North have been largely perplexed by questions of how to advance, to build strength on a sustainable basis in a way that might pose real challenges to states and capital”. Shantz also hints here at the idea of the inclusion of other epistemologies, other modes of struggle, other imaginaries of change being brought into the consciousness of the movements of the global North, building a “new language of an emerging constellation of struggle” (Holloway, 2010: 12). As Kincheloe and Berry (2004: 15) insist, “in its critical concern for just social change the bricolage seeks insight from the margins of Western societies and the knowledge and ways of knowing of non-Western peoples. Such insight helps bricoleurs reshape and sophisticate social theory, research methods, and interpretive strategies”, “bricolage is dedicated to a form of rigour that is conversant with numerous modes of meaning making and knowledge production – modes that originate in diverse social locations” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 169) and the employment of this way of doing research has been attempted in this thesis. This is also where universities have something

distinctive to offer; not only the co-production of knowledge, but the exchange of global knowledges and ways of thinking, acting and being.

8.6 Thinking through education.

If there were strong 'learning loops', feedback systems that cycle learning from one group to the next, such as those implied in the practice of bricolage: "feedback looping purposely works to evoke imaginary, virtual spaces; that is spaces that are packed with infinite possibilities to create new realities that are inclusive, diverse, socially just, equitable and respectful of agency and democratic, equal participation" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 130) the impossibility of change starts to crack, the more learning is shared, the stronger solidarity becomes, "we gain new appreciations of how power tacitly shapes what we know and how we came to know it" (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170). As a result, the less 'impossible' the task of changing the world becomes, because all turning back seems even more impossible than to stay where we were.

It seems that one of the lessons from all the sites, Occupy in particular, is that skilled pedagogues and bricoleurs are needed to initiate the required change, well versed in popular education and research and who understand the nuances of oppressive behaviour. This allows these behaviours, the classroom banter containing sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of oppressive and colonial attitudes, to be picked up immediately and be treated as teaching points. As mentioned earlier, this must not be a pedagogical vanguard, but a democratic and challengeable direction that starts the process of change through power sharing pedagogies. Any

pedagogical leadership must be willing, able and encouraged to relinquish its leadership through mechanisms that 'wither away the teacher', as Shor (1992) insists should happen, and allow an intellectual public to emerge and continuously educate each other and future generations, without the need for leadership. This initial pedagogical leadership could learn from the Zapatistas whose guiding principle is 'leading, we obey' (Ross, 2006). This is initially in contrast to Rancière's notions, but in keeping with the ideas of critical pedagogy; that conscientization is needed in order that the oppressed may begin the project of self-liberation. As Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 129) say of their experience:

if we do not postpone the syllabus and utilize the organic teachable moments ...we merely 'cover' the curriculum. The curriculum becomes the antagonist of non-engagement while contributing to the development of false concepts about teaching and learning...critical pedagogues are aware of the 'hidden' curriculum and are politically motivated to be counter-hegemonic.

This awareness of the hidden curriculum comes with experience and the practice of a critical gaze. This is because the bricoleur understands that "the relationship between individuals and their contexts is a central dynamic to be investigated. This relationship is a key ontological and epistemological concern of the bricolage; it is a connection that shapes the identities of human beings and the nature of the complex social fabric" (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170). This study's evidence suggests that revolutionary education cannot do without a skilled pedagogue, at least initially. Whilst it is acknowledged that vanguards tend to take this line; that they will be a temporary leadership, it is not vanguardism that is expressed here, as any vanguardism is countered by the power sharing pedagogy, which constantly monitors the elitism of the teacher and uncovers the attempts at manipulation

and suppression. Does it however, suggest that the pedagogue must be an expert in what is being taught? As heard, Rancière insists not. Nonetheless, Bahruth and Steiner (p. 122-123) insist that “teachers must recognise both conscious and unconscious attempts to derail the discourse”, can these attempts be recognised if the teacher does not have a good understanding of the subject the learners are grappling with?

Freire (1998: 74) says,

One of the basic questions that we need to look at is how to convert merely rebellious attitudes into revolutionary ones in the process of the radical transformation of society.....it is necessary to go beyond rebellious attitudes to a more critical and revolutionary position, which is in fact a position not simply of denouncing injustice but announcing a new utopia. Transformation of the world implies a dialectic between two actions: denouncing the process of de-humanization and announcing the dream of a new society

I would argue that to ensure that knowledges are not lost, subjugated or simply missed, an expert is needed to ensure that any dialogue encompasses ‘Other’ views and epistemologies. Freire also adds this: “It is precisely because ingenuous curiosity does not automatically become critical that one of the tasks of progressive educational praxis is the promotion of a curiosity that is critical, bold and adventurous”. The argument I want to make here is that without understanding the material that the students or learners are grappling with, the pedagogue may not be able to effectively assist in the development of a critical understanding. The non-expertise of the pedagogue in this view, may also allow despots and vanguards to emerge as the materials, and therefore the learners, are manipulated by persons that do understand the topics and are able therefore to steer the discussions to a certain conclusion without the pedagogue realising what is happening.

Occupy illustrated the desire for experts by inviting in 'experts' to assist with their ongoing inquiry into the state of things and what to do about it, but not being entirely led by them. In addition, Brookfield (2001) argues that people do not spontaneously become critical thinkers, and that even when they do, it is a painful process that needs to be nurtured by skilled helpers. This process maybe made easier by a skilled pedagogue asking the questions alongside the learner of a corpus of information that the pedagogue knows well and can therefore anticipate the pitfalls, the cul-de-sacs and the potential triumphs.

However, what is indicated by the study is that this process of developing critical thinking has to start with a belief in the equality of intelligence in order to ensure that the learner is able to become agentic in the process. I have argued that "critical pedagogy changes the relationship between teachers and students. It changes teachers from givers/authority figures to 'co-learners' with students" (Cho, 2013: 88), the SaP project, along with the SSC are examples of this, but this seems, from the studied sites to be especially true when a power sharing within the classroom is enacted with an emphasis on research engaged teaching and learning. The ignorant schoolmaster, however, cannot share power, but must hand it over to his/her students. This handing over of power could lead to despots emerging in the learning process, manipulating the learners as we saw in some cases in Occupy. An expert pedagogue might have picked this up and challenged it. For example, the Occupy GAs were intensely educative and concretised the norms and hegemonies of the movement. However, the deconstruction of the GAs may have been thought necessary by an attending pedagogue whose expertise

lies in gender theory, or democratic participation, who would have noticed this behaviour had they been mandated to carry out this task.

On analysis of the data, the ignorant schoolmaster thesis is flawed on several levels, first there has to be someone in the learning process to guide the newer learners to credible sources in their field, to suggest paths of learning as is happening in the SSC, therefore, at least initially, Rancière's thesis cannot be supported as a way immediately forward, except in terms of recognising that essential equality of intelligence mentioned earlier and central in Rancière's work. It is accepted in *The Ignorant School Master* as it is in critical pedagogy texts and in bricolage that each and every person brings valuable experience to the learning space, and that pedagogues must recognise both their ignorance and their unique contribution alongside that of the learners, thus rendering a hierarchy of intelligence between teacher and student defunct. This important recognition is essential in the struggle against manipulation and enclosure of the learning materials as well as the vigilance against the formation of vanguards as the experienced person, the pedagogue, adopts the stance of equal among a community of learners who come together to dialogue, debate and commune: the pedagogue is there to provide guidance when necessary and pick up those damaging oppressive behaviours. Therefore as Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 165) state, "the authority of the critical teacher is dialectical; as teachers relinquish the authority as truth providers, they assume the mature authority of facilitators of student inquiry and problem posing. In relation to such teacher authority, students gain their freedom – they gain the ability to become self-directed human beings capable of producing their own knowledge". The SaP initiative does allow for cross fertilisation and an opening up of disciplinary fields through

interdisciplinary working in a research engaged atmosphere and therefore is capable of evoking bricolage. This could well lead to a post-disciplinary epoch for many subjects and therefore a whole systems view of the world and its relations, connection and of course, lines of continuity. The same applies to social movements: “a task for critical education is to provide the space to bring those informal learning processes [in social movements] to consciousness, to reflect on them and to develop further strategies for action in exchange with others” (Steinklammer, 2012: 33). This is particularly applicable when utilising bricolage to connect the levels through research as “the bricolage enables researchers to produce new forms of knowledge that inform...political action in general” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 169).

Bringing out informal learning processes to consciousness, reflecting upon them and developing further strategies for action in exchange with others is something that can be done jointly by researchers and pedagogues (who, of course can be one in the same). This is also why, I argue, it is important to have some researchers/pedagogues who are relatively external to the political process going on in the social movement; because they need a critical distance to ensure that they can observe the crucial moments when these informal learning processes take place. Seeing these processes through the bricolage paradigm can assist in this by understanding the learning process as a whole process rather than a separate activity to those undertaken in the everyday activities of social movements by distorting the pedagogical lens. This is because “bricolage hopes to contribute to an evolving criticality... a basic dimension of an evolving criticality involves a comfort with the existence of alternative ways of analysing and producing knowledge” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 169).

Newman (2005: 29-30) insists, “we can teach about different forms of social action. We can provide an analysis of the different social sites where popular education might be located. We can teach the different domains of learning. We can teach different kinds of social control”. Resulting in politically literate, critically engaged independent learners for whom education has a different meaning than the schooled consuming of official knowledge.

To these ends, the democratic power-sharing that is displayed in the SSC, and to some extent in Occupy, seems the most productive organisation of learning for popular education, both outside and within the academy.

From their own study of a popular education project, von Kotze (2012: 108) explains that their participants,

having internalized how conditions of competition for scarce resources translate into competitive behaviour rather than sharing it took a while to recognise just how deep the ‘cut-throat’ mentality had permeated all aspects of their lives to the degree that it had become naturalised as normal. Reimagining relations as cooperative and reciprocal was a major step – and one that had to be made over and over in different sessions

This experience illustrates the necessity for gently handing over to the students if the goal is mass conscientization and not marginalisation of efforts toward change: sharing power, nurturing resistance, taking up incongruent and solipsistic behaviours as teaching points. For some students, even those with much schooling, ‘education’ is quite a new experience and to think of education as a political act, even more so.

Bricolage assists with this notion of the midwifing, as Freire (1993a) might call it, of individuals into this new criticality as bricolage often possesses what Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 171) call a “catalytic validity” which “displays the

reality-altering impact of the inquiry process and directs this impact so that those under study will gain self-understanding and self-direction”, therefore assisting individuals to come to a conscientization. These ideas start to look like a sharp contrast to some of the ideas expressed so far in this work; however, this is a misconception. Holloway (2010) talks about every small act of rebellion, such as reading a book in the park on a sick day from work, being an act of resistance that cracks capitalism; there is consensus in the literature that old revolutionary theory is no longer useful: there is no aim here to overthrow the governments and entre a violent and bloody revolution. The argument in the literature, and here, is summed up by the Zapatistas notion that we walk, because we are going very far. The ideas contained here are not a coming insurrection, as The Invisible Committee put it, but a quiet and sustained rebellion, a revolt, a mutiny. Education is not an uprising on its own, it may be preparation for one, but that is for the people to decide, and for educational researchers to follow witness and attempt to assist.

8.7 Thinking through research

My argument here is that we cannot decouple education or activism from research, as bricolage suggests, they are, or perhaps should be, one and the same. However, tensions arise, as critique of activities can seem like misunderstanding or misrepresentation if the relationship is not handled sensitively. Bricoleurs understand that “social structures do not determine individual subjectivity but constrain it in remarkably intricate ways” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 171) and therefore it is often individually problematic to espouse

solidarity whilst *appearing* to make judgements through research activities. Perhaps, then, if we organise education systems to allow people to relish tensions in their social relations, recognise the informal education in everyday life and begin to see, as explored earlier, the political as pedagogical and the pedagogical as political, research interventions will become a recognised and valued part of our growth and evolution as a human species, especially if, as in bricolage, they are not compartmentalised and seen as an elite overview of the social worlds of others because the job of the bricoleur is to “commit their knowledge work to helping address the ideological and informational needs of marginalized groups and individuals” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 169). This achieved, people will then be able to build in the cycles of action research in all parts of the social world as the tensions, the critiques and the research interventions will be just another element of the positive social relations being built. This is particularly possible, I would argue, with the use of bricolage and its embrace of complexity, its acceptance of tensions and its relationship with creating new (research) relationships. The use of bricolage allows for the gathering of people in solidarity because it subverts and transgresses the boundaries of traditional research and embraces epistemologies not necessarily familiar to its practitioners. Therefore it is particularly useful as a research paradigm that encourages an active role for research, researchers and most importantly, research participants: those in conversation with the world around them.

The sites in this study have given us what Burdick and Sandlin (2010: 3) call “glimpses of the pedagogical Other – forms and practices of pedagogy that exist independently of, even in opposition to, the knowledge within the common sense ‘research imagination’ (Kenway & Fahey, 2009) found in the

general body of scholarly discourse on education". Burdick and Sandlin argue that without a careful and imaginative approach to researching these sites of learning outside formal institutions, "researchers risk taking on an institutionalised form of the colonial gaze, applying reductive logics to or even completely failing to witness phenomena that are not easily resolved in dominant cultural meanings and images of teaching and learning" (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010: 3), again bricolage can avoid this through its insistence that researchers should construct "a far more active role for humans in shaping both reality and in creating the research process and narratives that represent it" (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 168). Researchers need, therefore, to understand that, as stated earlier, "these moments embody not just practices to adapt and creatively redeploy, but are in themselves ways of understanding the world and forms of research in action" (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007: 37). I would argue that researchers of these types of public and popular pedagogy are there to help make this 'understanding the world' and forms of research explicit and effective, of which bricolage is capable. Nonetheless, "defining and capturing critical public pedagogies through the lens of traditional educational research has the potential to arrest the potency of such activism" (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010: 8) and therefore using bricolage to "expand research methods and construct a more rigorous mode of knowledge about education" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 1) does seem appropriate.

8.8 The future of the academy, the community and change agents

What intellectual and political tactics might be appropriate for conceptualising an occupation of curriculum? What are the spaces and times of curriculum that we might inhabit otherwise? And what external macro- and micro-politics must this project be connected to in order for it to have any transformative potential beyond individual perception?

(Neary & Amsler, 2012: 116)

The above questions posed by Neary and Amsler are central to the ideas in this section, and indeed this thesis. Kane (2005: 40) has this to say:

In my experience, the rhetoric of ‘academic freedom’ still allows us, mostly, to be honest about what we think...Our role is to use our relative autonomy to develop critical consciousness amongst our students, both through posing questions – and making explicit their ideological underpinnings – and, more generally, by exposing students to a range of ideas and literature which is often ignored or not seen as relevant to the dominant instrumentalism.

It could be argued that there is the potential for this in the SaP initiative at UL, through the model of research-engaged teaching and learning. Could this model spread?

Crowther and Villegas (2012: 58) insist that “the [current political] trend all looks very favourable for the educator committed to a democratic project for social justice and equality”. Steinklammer (2012: 30) concurs and adds, “it is necessary to connect the claims that education should have an empowering effect with the perspective of resistance”.

It is worth noting here, as Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 3) do, “that every great educational theory is imbued with elements of what might be called the

utopian disposition” and this work is no different. It is worth using Peters and Freeman-Moir’s description of utopia to illustrate the interpretation of utopian thinking subscribed to here, as this notion of utopian thinking, engages once more, with the attempt here of thinking through bricolage:

Utopianism is not about specific solutions but rather the opening of the imagination to speculation and open exploration. ...In this education of desire the status quo is opened up to question but the challenge is not restricted to the short comings of the present. The utopian thinker is also free to think of ways of living that lie completely beyond what is currently envisaged.

(Peters & Freeman-Moir, 2006: 4)

As society moves to a more popular ethos for its education, pedagogues must “ensure that critique and the creative imagination fertilize one another” (von Kotze, 2012: 111). The potential for this to happen in the researched sites and elsewhere, including in the explored research paradigm of bricolage, is already there. It is worth mentioning here the recent rise in the number of ‘free universities’ (for examples see <http://sustainingalternatives.wordpress.com/>), where volunteer academics teach courses for which there is no fee. Also, public pedagogy initiatives such as The University for Strategic Optimism’ (<http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/>) a group of mainly post-graduate students who do teach-outs in banks, on the streets, and in other sites of political dissatisfaction.

However, there is no need to give up free time, or teach-out in banks to be part of the struggle (although efforts are redoubled if people do), scholars can contribute both within, against and beyond the university, eventually realising the ambition of dissolving the walls of the university and turning whole cities into explicitly pedagogical sites and generating “questions

previously unimagined” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170) through their research activities. However, until this is a reality, Shantz (2013: 72) thinks, “there is a pressing need ... for institutions, organisations, and relations that can sustain people as well as building capacities for self-defence and struggle”. He calls these “infrastructures of resistance”.

Denzin (2010: 20), building on the work of others, says, “we need to become more accomplished in linking these interventions to those institutional sites where troubles are turned into public issues, and public issues transformed into social policy (Nespor, 2006: 124; Mills 1959; Charmaz, 2005)”. Real opposition to what is happening requires more than momentary joy (Holloway, 2010; Shantz, 2013), “it requires foundations and infrastructures that contribute to significant advances while maintaining a basis for ongoing struggles” (Shantz, 2013: 15). The SSC and SaP, extended and reproduced could constitute those foundations and infrastructures, making both models productive sites of struggle.

This, then, is the utopian future for educational institutions, one where alliances can be made in order to dissolve the essentialised dichotomy of teacher and learner, researcher and researched, through a bricolage of knowledges and ways of knowing. Of course, there are plenty of people who have said this before, however as Kincheloe and Tobin (2006: 4) say, “while we deeply respect those who have come before us and have helped us to get where we are, we are ambitious – we want to go farther into the epistemological and ontological fog”. The time seems to be right, society seems to be in a socio-political juncture that lends itself to the possibility of radical change, capitalisms crises have reached the point of destabilisation,

there are uprisings all over the world and people are edgy (conversations with Occupiers; Holloway, 2010; Neary & Amsler, 2012; Merrifield, 2011; The Invisible Committee, 2009). As the neoliberal agenda of policy makers tightens its grip on institutions, they must transgress that grip and intervene as teachers and researchers in any/every way they can.

The move to a more popular based pedagogy in these institutions appears as an effective way to transgress. I have discussed that individual's thoughts, minds and hearts are places that are essential to occupy as they are enclosed in a way that is easily transgressed and escaped if people join their efforts. "Popular education is concerned with learning to identify, use and resist various kinds of social control" (Newman, 2005: 28), this justifies it becoming the transgressive norm in university institutions. Popular education, coupled with bricolage research, as discussed, is also concerned with pedagogy that comes from the interests and needs of the 'people', the students, the community members, the populace, the Multitude. They are, therefore, very effective at raising the volume of the silenced and subjugated voices. This challenge to the hegemonic regime of truth constitutes in those members of the group who have not been subjugated a form of awareness raising:

Education is not a habitus, but a force that objects to every kind of habitualisation of habits that chain the human being to what already exists..... on the other hand, this cannot be done in isolation from practice, since the practical sense is structured by practice and at the same time has a structuring effect. Therefore, practical experiences and action learning are necessary for a new practice to be developed and for the practical sense to be worked in interaction with the social world.

(Steinklammer, 2012: 31)

This is where a grand action research cycle comes into its own, with the notion that the resistance that education provides to habituation cannot be fully achieved in isolation from practice. Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 3) say of utopian pedagogy that “utopia links the special dimension of living with the temporal dimension of learning and in that sense any utopian methodology can be said to ground education in the everyday fabric of the imagined society”. However, if that society is merely imagined then where is the practical experience insisted upon by Steinklammer? The practical experience that students of higher education can have is creating alliances with groups prefiguring these utopian futures - starting dialogues in order that they may create mutual benefit by setting up action research projects with stable groups (such as communes, free universities and the SSC, organisations like The Centre for Alternative Technology (<http://www.cat.org.uk/index.html>) and others) or as witness to protests, street demonstrations and occupations, practicing the larger, slower action research cycle there. As these groups of activists and people living otherwise in our society currently have limited access to institutions of HE, groups such as the SSC are ideal grounds for the presentation of findings and discussion of results. Groups such as the SSC could therefore, not only be autonomous education providers, but could also provide an essential link between the universities and activist groups. That is, until the divisions are dissolved. This bricolage process gives everyone, academics, community members, activists and any other interested parties equal (almost) access to theory and interruptive thought. This should result in the academic voice being heard in the protest and the community action and the subjugated voices of activist communities being heard in the academy: a bricolaging of the Multitude. This

potentially results in a praxis where theory informs the practice of those outside the academy and practice informs the theory of those inside. The future of this process contains several possibilities: the dissolution of the barriers of HE in terms of the dissemination of knowledge and access to academic thinkers; the inclusion of more voices and experiences in academic work; and the disappearing necessity for public intellectuals in favour of an intellectual public; and the rise and continuation of a radical democracy that encounters and celebrates countervailing discourses as a matter of necessity.

Ollis (2012: 8) says of her own research, and I would like to think of mine in the same way, that “this research, in itself, is a process of activism”.

Nevertheless, I want to suggest that more is done than merely ‘give voice’ to the pedagogical Other. I want to assert that HE institutions and researchers *become*, wherever possible and to whatever extent, the pedagogical Other and make that Other the norm, a wonderful destabilised, unbalanced, temporal and utopian norm.

It has been said by feminist activists for a long time that the personal must become the political, but the personal should now perhaps become more, it should become *pedagogical*: “‘society is not composed of individuals’, says Marx, What constitutes society is the system of its social relations, in which individuals live, work and struggle” (Leonardo, 2006: 82).

Education, like insurrection, requires building from the ground up, enclosed as it often is in the mechanisms of schooling, testing and surveillance.

Therefore, the future of education, like the future of all social relations, should hold the promise of “comradeship, dignity, amorosity, love, solidarity,

fraternity, friendship, ethics” (Holloway, 2010: 43). Each person’s struggles within education, to occupy the curriculum that emerges in the academy, in the community and on the streets, have, then, to be connected to the wider struggles, if they are not connected by those in the struggle, they will be connected by those they stand in opposition to. Indeed, they already are, the ‘New Precariat’ (Standing, 2011, 2013) includes academic workers on zero-hours contracts (Dunn, 2013; University and College Union, 2013). Therefore choosing and taking sides becomes a necessity: “it is only by taking sides that it becomes possible to understand the whole, and to transform it” (Roggero, 2011: 6).

8.9 The escape from enclosure

Not only education but social reality itself has become schooled.

(Illich, 2011: 2)

Even if critical pedagogy in particular and education in general cannot by themselves reverse these conditions, they can break the silence moving us into the worst world possible. Interfere by teaching your heart out. Interfere with where we are headed by making classrooms public spaces whose discussions grapple with what is happening to us. Shine bright lights on the mechanisms of power.... Critical classrooms are opportunities to circulate unauthorised democratic discourse against the status quo.

(Shor in Macrine, 2009: 128-9)

Milojevic (2006: 24) asserts that “the main problem with the prevalence of the dystopian genre is its capacity to legitimise fears while delegitimising hope”. This makes escape from enclosure difficult, if not impossible. This, then, is the reality with which we are faced, a reality that Giroux (2001: xxiii), building on Adorno, accuses of being a “prohibition on thinking itself”. Therein, I would argue, lays the solution: *thinking itself*. And, as Esteva (2010: 29) insists, a necessity to begin “enclosing the enclosers”.

I argue then that what has come to light in this investigation is that what is needed now is a social connection based on trust, solidarity, generosity and gift, but as Holloway (2010) warns, for the moment this can only exist as an oppositional form. The imperative for escape then, needs to be hopeful, utopian, but also in opposition to, against, united by a common enemy; this is a battle ground in a class war. In the sites in this work, it was acknowledged that Occupy was *against* the banking system, austerity and the corruption in our political system; SaP is *against* the student as consumer model of the neoliberal university; the SSC is *against* the commodification of knowledge and the elitism of the university institution. But all are, or were, hopeful; hopeful of the actuality of new social relations; all believed in the positive possibilities and I argue that there is something very instructive to be learnt from that hope.

Their hope has been, and continues to be, realistic and grounded. Hope is the will to accept and overcome difficulties, as autonomous projects in a collective struggle. The evidence of these sites suggests, therefore, that individuals need to organise and strategize for hope, for institutions of the commons, for the future of free thought itself. These struggles have to take

place within, against and beyond our current enclosure because “there is no longer an outside within contemporary capitalism” (Roggero, 2011: 9).

8.10 Final words of radical hope

This study has suggested that what will create the change needed for the escape from enclosure are the individual and collective thoughts and actions of people in their newly occupied selves. Social movements here are seen as essential sites of slippage, of experimentation, of the collective occupation of space and time. They practice essential forms of public pedagogy and are furtive sites for bricolage research to bring out the subjugated voices of the oppressed, to help people understand that “all observations of the world are shaped either consciously or unconsciously by social theory” and that “such theory provides the framework that highlights or erases what might be observed” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 168). Because bricolage deals with a “double ontology of complexity: first, the complexity of objects of inquiry and their being-in-the-world; second, the nature of the social construction of human subjectivity, the production of human ‘being’”. Such understandings open a new era of social research where the process of becoming human agents is appreciated with a new level of sophistication” (Kincheloe *et al.*, 2011: 170).

However, as we have seen, social movements can also become sites of reproduction, activism is fast paced and deeply embedded cultural hegemonies are missed in the confusion and urgency of the action, especially when it is focused on external tensions. Therefore, it is my view that when the action, the volcano of anger and emotion is spent – watched,

witnessed and recorded as the *pedagogical moment* - activists should have the opportunity to regroup into their, now more pedagogical, institutions of the commons. Reflecting and learning, extending the knowledge and the scope ready for the next action alongside academics who through a bricolage of research have reached that catalytic validity that allows an strengthening in the efficacy of the movement, embedding new learning at a personal and collective level in order to live otherwise now.

In this scenario, the researcher is not distant or detached; they are inside the pedagogical moment. They do not then 'teach' the activists where they went wrong, or how to be 'better' at activism, but start a dialogue, accepting the equality of intelligence but mindful of the essential roles each group plays in the activities of the other, sharing the power. They dialogue about their findings; what was missed, what should be celebrated and how change was elicited, both inside and outside the movement. The critical distance of the bricolage researcher becomes ally for the group, not the ritualised objectivity of a detached observer but the friend who picks you up when your energy is depleted. It is this space where more organisations such as the SSC are required, these places where activist and community members can insert their own biographies into the action, where camaraderie, solidarity and equality can be discovered between individuals who have previously seen each other from a cultural distance, research performed through the bricolage lens has the viable potential to bridge this gap. Now the various groups occupy space and time in creative and intellectual ways. Moving collectively from the necessity of the public intellectual toward a fulfilling and vital intellectual public. Then perhaps one day, this organisational ideology could become what we now think of as academe.

Merrifield (2011) asserts that the time for critique is over. I would disagree, the time for critique is rife, but that critique must escape the enclosure of the divided spectrum: the walls of academe and the activist circles and become a people's critique: a popular critique. Bricoleurs are what Kincheloe *et al.* (2011: 170) call "process sensitive scholars". They are able to follow this popular critique as they "watch the world flow by like a river in which the exact contents of the water are never the same". They understand that "no portrait of social phenomenon is ever exactly the same as another. Because all physical, social, cultural, psychological and educational dynamics are connected in a larger fabric, researchers will produce different descriptions of an object of inquiry depending on what part of the fabric they have focussed on – what part of the river they have seen". Therefore the knowledge they produce about it will not be reductionist but celebratory and imaginative, producing hope. However, to echo Holloway (2010) once more, we need to do more, we need to go further, we need now not only a collective critique, but also collective and individual action, infused with collective theorising. Making socially good use of the emergent intellectual public.

Williams' (1989) sentiment that to be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing, has been echoed by the sites under examination here, and although it is acknowledged that this is a sentiment out of context, it has been useful to the thinking about what is needed to be done. What is required when Marx and Engels (1846/ 2007, p. 123) insist that philosophers only interpreted the world: "the point, however, is to change it". The answer from the sites also seems to be to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

I want to return here to the overall argument that this thesis has presented and make some concluding remarks as to how that argument is supported by the evidence from the fieldwork sites and the discussions and dialogues with the relevant literature. In doing that, I will address the extent to which the research has or has not answered its own initial questions. Next I will indicate what new questions the research has produced. Finally, I will use this section to make explicit the work's contribution to knowledge in its field and beyond.

The first question asked in the beginning of this work was that of what pedagogical experiments occurred in Occupy and what models of practice were identifiable? Judged by the theoretical explorations used in the thesis, the individuals in Occupy attempted to democratically share power in a critically orientated pedagogical structure that fell short of being sustainable for many reasons. It is argued here that one of those reasons was that actually the term 'Occupy' turned out to be an empty signifier: it became, and continues to be, a 'bucket' into which the engaged multitude could pour its discontents sometimes in a focussed way, sometimes not. The viewpoints that are brought together in this empty signifier do not necessarily have a homogenous message or vision to move toward, they do not necessarily want precisely the same thing. However, they are all *against* the same thing, united by the perceived common enemy of corruption and greed at the top.

However, the ambiguity of that emptiness could also be seen to be its greatest strength, allowing the notion of occupation to contain many thoughts, ideas and countervailing discourses, allowing new pedagogical experiments, and new models of practice, therefore, Occupy cannot be spoken about in a past tense, the political/pedagogical experiment will continue for as long as the empty signifier seems a useful way to link the struggles. This form of fluidic, spatially and temporally contextualised voice of Occupy has the possible potential of creating and organising spaces that are both creative and politically progressive. This is because they do not silence dissent, but relish its ability to add to the constitution of new identities and new forms of relations and organisations that may eventually replace the corrupt and greed ridden institutions that the multitude of heterogeneous voices argue against.

The thesis has therefore argued that there are lines of continuity, specifically addressed in Chapter Eight, between the three sites explored here, which may be enough to begin the constitution of new organisational principles that have the potential to lead to a revolutionary pedagogy of solidarity.

A second question of the research was that of the relevance of the pedagogical experiment within Occupy to other radical experiments, specifically, in this work, the SSC and SaP projects. The answer, viewed through the pedagogical and political lenses of this work, seems to be that the pedagogical project initiated by members of the Occupy London encampment had a great deal to teach other projects about the nature of organic pedagogy. Specifically, the work done here uncovered situations of oppression, such as the subjugated voices of women and the silencing of

internal dissent, that can arise in these fast flowing and organic pedagogical situations, situations that other, more stable projects would need to be aware of and address if they are to support radical and revolutionary change. The SSC seem to have attempted to address this by their internal monitoring; discussing relations of gender and other aspects of social life and relating them to their experience in the group, but elsewhere they seemed absent in my research. It is therefore argued here that the notion of a pedagogue being needed to ensure that the pedagogical project does not fall foul of co-option and despotism is borne out in the explorations of Occupy London and it is further argued that although Rancière's notions in the Ignorant Schoolmaster have proved useful for discussion, they do not stand up to scrutiny in this context and that some kind of organised pedagogical direction, albeit constituted through an organic curriculum, is essential in order for hegemonic and dominant conditioned behaviours to be challenged when they arise, as discussed in the preceding Chapter.

The third question that this research initially asked was could a form of 'learning loop' or broad action research type cycle be established between the three different pedagogical actions (see Chapters Two, Four, Seven and Eight) as a way to connect different forms of learning within in social movements, community groups, and higher education establishments, so that they might support each other and find ways to share and contribute to each other's knowledge and tactics for creating transformative change?

The main obstacle to this, which in light of the ethos of Occupy London came as a surprise, was that of the insider/outsider division between academics and activists, although this may eventually be challenged through the rise of

autonomous higher learning initiatives that are being set up around the world. However, this work has argued that, particularly through a bricolage research paradigm, there is no reason for this dichotomy to present.

Research can be thought of as activism, but only under the proviso that an activist pedagogy is enacted to engender a reciprocal relationship between activism and academe. Thinking about the two current ends of a strata becomes thinking about a cycle of solidarity, knowledge share and activism, the SSC seems to represent an embryonic form of organisation that has the potential to make this relationship possible. However, this is a temporally situated notion, as the rise of autonomous higher learning initiatives suggests that the university may possibly become irrelevant to the struggle.

Nonetheless, the thesis has argued that this potential trajectory of popular, critical pedagogies that cycle from the streets to the academy has been explored (see Chapters 7 and 8) and is worthy of further exploration to concretise the ideas explored here.

There is a notion of unfinishedness in this research which contributes, it is argued, to the thinking about the power of the bricolage to expand research methods, as discussed in Chapter Four: Rethinking Research. This is because the research has been thought about through the lens of bricolage, which has enabled the possibility through the post-disciplinary lens of bricolage, of imagining how possibilities and potentialities might be extended into research projects to allow full explorations of their enactments. In this work, bricolage has been utilised to understand the phenomena under study in creative and imaginative ways; talking not only about what was there and what could be seen, but extending those theories and practices into the realms of imaginative possibility. One of the weaknesses with bricolage is

that, as Kincheloe and Berry warned, it is a lifelong pursuit, and therefore I make no claims as to reaching the status of fully fledged bricoleur, as discussed in Chapter 4. Instead, I have carried out a piece of case study research, with supplementary sites, which has been thought about through the lens of bricolage. Bricolage is a wide lens, which whilst allowing for a great deal of freedom for the researcher, can become overwhelming in a research project such as this one. The strength of bricolage, I would argue, is that it allows the researcher to think freely about their research without the constraints of the 'recipe book' methods of some research paradigms. It is very difficult within the constraints of one research project at the beginning of a research career, to carry out a genuine piece of bricolage research and therefore the most useful thing from my point of view has been the *ethos* of bricolage and the strengths of the lens that this provides: the acceptance of complexity and the notion of carrying out the research in a post-disciplinary way, allowing the early career researcher to dispense with the preconceived notions about their area of study. I would not change my adoption of the bricolage paradigm, but neither would I say I have been fully successful in either fully utilising its potential power as a research methodology or creating a piece of true bricolage research. I would still argue for the use of bricolage, because I understand it as being a robust and liberating paradigm for research, I would argue it does have the potential power, once practiced to fully competent level, to extend the thoughts of researchers in many directions, I would argue it has assisted me to think in ways that I may not have thought had I not adopted this position. Bricolage does not claim to be a method; indeed, I would argue that it is the antithesis to 'method', singular: it is a *methodology*, a way of thinking about research, which is why it leaves

the individual researcher, in their individual context, to decide on their own methods, to become contextualised methodological negotiator, whilst allowing the ability to think across boundaries, through complexity and understand the (at least potential) power of their research.

9.1 The Overall Argument

The underlying arguments in this thesis, as explored in relation to literature and evidence are that for Occupy to become a global force for social change, it needs to concentrate on resolving its own, internal tensions, such as the oppressive behaviours explored in Chapter Six. This would mean creating the conditions for internal monitoring of conditioned behaviours through their pedagogical experiments, whilst continuing to offer up and relish in counter-vailing discourses. This could be helped, it is argued, by the introduction of feedback loops and 'grand' action research type cycles from other levels of education provision and research.

As discussed in Chapter Six, the pedagogical experiments within the London Occupy movement were several: firstly, the overall experience of being involved with the encampment is seen here as one of the pedagogical experiments, that of building and prefiguring new social relations; secondly, the 'Tent City University' - a space for discussion between peers and invited experts was initiated by those with no apparent experience of formal education - has been largely attended to in this thesis; thirdly, the School of Ideas (formally the Bank of Ideas, see Chapter Six), which, although it was not on the site of the Occupy London LXS camp, was a part of the overall

experience. The School of Ideas, however, has not been largely attended to for reasons previously discussed. However, the notion of pedagogical experimentation that this work has focussed on was the overall experience of being involved with the encampment, with the prefigurative nature of the Occupy LXS camp and with the setting up and experiencing of Tent City University.

In the discussion on the methods that were used in the thesis, it was stated by Adelman *et al.* (1980: 59) that good case studies are capable of offering support to alternative interpretations. Although the data is rich enough to support alternative arguments/interpretations, I consider there is strong support for such practices as the horizontalism of teaching and learning and the pedagogical elements of prefigurative politics. These were identified and critiqued and the pedagogical relevance to other sites explored, such as the organisation of organic popular pedagogy and what it might teach us about organisational structures to promote radical and sustainable democracy and social justice, as provided in the discussions of Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight. Following this, a learning and research trajectory of possible solidaristic support for those sites was explored in the hope of doing just that, supporting alternatives.

The argument that arose from these broad aims - of identifying alternative practices with relevance to other, more formal pedagogical sites in the hope of creating a solidaristic learning and research trajectory between them - was that the various sites under exploration here are offering, to various degrees, a vision of alternative ways of doing, relating and living. These visions include socially just and democratic ways of learning together,

communing and cooperating beyond the social relations imposed by global capitalism – all offered through, what I would argue, were pedagogical paradigms. It was because each site was not only claiming to offer, but also making attempts at offering, alternative methods, such as mutual aid, in the case of Occupy, cooperation in the case of the SSC and agentic knowledge production in the SaP program, and generally of education that was political and aimed at social change, that it was argued that a potential ‘loop of learning’ or ‘grand action research cycle’ was a possibility between them. The work was therefore able to argue that the various experiments; the Occupy London movement; the Social Science Centre in Lincoln; and The University of Lincoln, could have the potential for a solidaristic interrelationship that would bring the ‘levels’ of learning into dialogue with each other and improve their efficacy to affect social change for a more just world.

This argument was made through examining the three sites separately for their emergent pedagogical practices and then together, exploring the links and shared practices between them in an attempt to understand what they had to offer each other in terms of both solidarity and learning. Having carried out these explorations the overall argument then became that firstly, pedagogical practices that were contextualised in the current socio-political climate were emerging and they did have the possible potential to represent revolutionary practices when considered in the terms of the literature that they indicated. In particular, the Crack Capitalism thesis presented by Holloway (2010) and the critical, power sharing pedagogy of Shor (1996). These practices included sharing power amongst all learners and ‘teachers’, inserting biographies into the wider socio-political contexts and creating

research led teaching and learning to give agency to the undergraduate learner in higher education. This revolutionary potential was indicated and supported by the evidence of the sites as a new form of revolutionary theory that consists of the activism of political pedagogy enabling and encouraging just social changes, such as the production of democratic citizens who relish tension and the democratisation of public life through a raising of social consciousness. This has the potential to be achieved through the interaction of various levels of learning through from social movements to academe, thus eventually rupturing the social fabric of capitalism, through the cracks created by these new pedagogical and prefigurative relations. It seems that there is no desire in the fieldwork sites to overthrow a government, but to form a new thesis of revolution that involves the interplay between theory and action, a job, I have argued, that popular, critical education has the potential to be instrumental in.

9.2 Opportunities for Further Research

In relation to the first question asked in this research, that of what pedagogical experiments occurred in Occupy and what models of practice were identifiable, it seems, as the ongoing project of occupation moves around the globe, a question will remain for other initiatives and the conversation will continue in future research as the event is not over, the significantly 'empty bucket' of Occupy moves across continents and peoples, linking them together in a plethora of struggles, and more initiatives such as the SSC may be needed to link the learning from one to the other to keep the

cycle going. Therefore, from a pedagogical point of view it is felt that more research is needed throughout the 'occupy' journey, should it continue, as to how to maintain the explicitly pedagogical aspects of this vessel for discontent in order to understand how people learn to act otherwise in these situations. It was the *pedagogical* and prefigurative nature of the Occupy London movement and encampment that was so interesting and potentially important, if this nature is lost, one wonders what the 'occupy' vessel might become.

It also is felt that these explorations and examinations of the possibilities of the sites under exploration have allowed me to ask new questions, not thought of at the beginning of this research, about how to proceed in the quest for a revolutionary education to come to the fore and to emerge, as was hoped, from the specific context under study, thus creating further hope that change could be elicited from a pedagogic structure. Therefore it is argued here that there are and will continue to be many more opportunities for further research as long as there is popular dissent and corrupt government.

However, in order for the nature of any changes or new initiatives to begin to be understood, those further questions need to be formed explicitly and further research is deemed necessary to answer them:

One of the significant questions still begging an answer, I would argue, that should potentially be examined is that of if Occupy's hope of seeing the end of capitalism did not bear fruit, what is it that would actually make change happen and how can education play a part? The argument made here was that capitalism has to be 'cracked' as understood in the writings of Holloway

(2010). The rise of Occupy as an empty signifier has the possibility to be significant in this context. It is felt now that it is important to 'watch this space', the space of future Occupy events, happenings, interruptions in the hegemonic political flow and to witness, record and analyse what potential forms of relations and organisations arise there. As stated earlier, Occupy seems unfinished and will potentially continue to inspire if the latest 'Occupation' in Hong Kong: Occupy Central, is anything to go by. Therefore this may continue to be a rich source of research and political learning, new questions have the potential to be asked with every new occupation and new answers sought regarding how can things be done better and what forms of organisation arise and are sustained?

A second significant question relating to the gaining of this understanding that arose was that of if the enclosure of higher education as a radical space of free and utopian thought continues, what are the possibilities for the future of pedagogical experimentation? This is a question that particularly interests me in my position in the academy, as teacher and as researcher. It looks, in the sites explored, as if the fight has to take place within, against and beyond the academy, as seems to be happening in Lincoln with the SSC and the SaP project as two ends of the same initiative, as Neary insists they are. Using the University classroom to take the first step and encouraging radical spaces beyond for those ready to join the struggle to become involved in. There are many experiments in higher learning as discussed, and it is argued that some of these may have the potential, such as the SSC, to become sustainable organisations, but some may not. So as Shantz (quoted earlier) says, it may be time to build 'infrastructures of resistance' in our existing institutions as sustainable alternatives are explored and hopefully

found, but these need to be recorded, witnessed and further research to ensure their sustainability and their real commitment to radical social change.

As was determined by the third research question in this thesis, concerning the possible trajectory from one project to another, this work has indeed attempted to understand, as its contribution to on-going debates, whether there are enough lines of continuity, enough connections and understandings, to enable the creation of such a trajectory from one pedagogical project to another and this main question has been answered as a tentative possibility. The problems with this possibility are many, as discussed throughout the thesis, and each would need to be addressed in turn through a combination of research and pedagogical practices. This work begins to look more like traditional action research at some of its points, as where possible, I would argue action research projects should be set up with the more stable linking initiatives to assure their efficacy. Where this is not possible, because of the fluidity of a situation or the temporality, then the 'grand' action research type cycle could come into play as a way to see whether changes in the solidarity between the pedagogical levels has taken place, or where it could with some extra 'tinkering'.

The notion has also been explored here that perhaps, the traditional university can never be this space of activism. I would argue here that it is worth continuing research in this vein to see what happens with the Student as Producer ethos at the University of Lincoln, and any others like it, as this initiative seemed to create the possibilities for the trajectory. Therefore, if it continues to succeed and grow, then I would continue to argue that the university is a useful site of struggle, however, if it is subsumed by the

neoliberal agenda in HE, then I would suggest that the university is perhaps not a useful institution for this type of struggle and the struggle may need to be taken elsewhere.

Whether the SaP initiative succeeds or not, I would still argue that the potential trajectory of popular, critical pedagogies that cycle from the streets to the academy that has been explored here (see chapters 7 and 8) is worthy of further exploration to concretise the ideas and, as said, witness what happens to a university that has attempted to begin the journey to doing education otherwise, but also to find other potentials, other possibilities. This exploration may take the form of many different research projects at every stage of the overall trajectory and cycle, with many different actors taking part. This research would need to seek to understand the attitudes at each level about the others and what barriers need to be overcome to begin to implement such a cycle.

A final opportunity for further research that I argue this work presents is in the realms of research methods: the spirit of bricolage from my beginnings with it will continue on with me and it inspires me to think about the power of bricolage to expand research methods out of their traditional place in the academy and out into the streets, the social movements, the communities and the struggle for social justice.

9.3 Contribution to knowledge

As discussed earlier on in this conclusion, the notion of Occupy as a continuing empty signifier makes the answering of the initial research question problematic as instead of being an answer, it is more a contribution to ongoing debates that perhaps attempt to understand whether there are enough lines of continuity to create trajectories, not just from one form of pedagogical intervention to another, but also from one struggle to another. The case study of Occupy presents as an attempt to do just this, to create these 'empty' spaces to be filled with, at times, antagonistic dissenting voices in the potential hope of forming a new democratic public. However, on closer examination, Occupy failed to do this, with internal voices of dissent silenced when criticising the central experiment of Occupy London, that of consensus decision making, as was discussed in Chapter Six. In addition to the failing to give equal status and voice to socially subjugated groups, such as women, within the movement meant that Occupy failed to use fully the potential power of what they had created. This thesis has been a snapshot of a stage in the development of Occupy as a movement of ideas, people and issues, and explores the strengths and weaknesses of a certain aspect of the pedagogical practices of that snapshot and cannot therefore claim to be a definitive assessment of what Occupy could, or may, become but a contribution to ongoing debates. As for the other sites explored in this thesis, I would argue here that they have the potential to assist future Occupy actions along these lines, but only if the insider/outsider dichotomy can be resolved, otherwise the voices of those that wish to see just social change;

the subjugated, the timid, the voices of those unable to join such street eruptions for a myriad of reasons (ill health, vulnerability, pressures of family and caring responsibilities, etc.) will be missed in the voices of the multitude.

As has been discussed in relation to the second research question, situations of oppression have been uncovered by the research, such as the subjugated voices of women and the silencing of internal dissent, and as discussed, these often do arise in fast flowing and organic pedagogical situations. Nonetheless, I would argue that the contribution to knowledge about the nature of these emergent social movements and their prefigurative constitution is that they still have a long way to go in terms of real conscientization, in terms of actually ridding themselves of oppressive internal behaviour. I am not the only person to argue this as has been seen; however, it is important that this knowledge is not glossed over in the name of hope and expectation.

This understanding also led to the argument that Occupy's Tent City University's attempt at organic organisation and horizontalism within the realm of teaching and learning gave rise to the notion that perhaps the cultural and pedagogical imperatives needed to dispense with the teacher in the learning space are not yet in place, this speaks to other initiatives that might wish to try this form of pedagogical horizontalism.

Therefore the conclusion here is that the notion, defined in this work through Shor (1996), of the critical democratic power sharing pedagogy is most conducive for producing change agents and conscientised individuals who are able to challenge the status quo of dominant relations. It has been argued here that this power sharing pedagogy would enable countervailing

discourses to emerge in the classrooms creating a familiarity with tensions, counter-hegemonic desires and the disquieting effects of a radically democratic social life of the Multitude. Therefore, an intellectual public that understands the necessity of the constant and revolutionary democratisation of public life could emerge from institutions of learning in order to reconstitute social relations to promote justice for all. It was only by exploring the organic horizontalism of the pedagogic aspects of Occupy London, that this knowledge became unveiled in this thesis and has the possible potential to allow those in initiatives such as the SSC and SaP to understand better the role of the pedagogues in creating these conditions for revolutionary change.

This work has attempted to understand, as its contribution to on-going debates, whether there are enough lines of continuity, enough connections and understandings, to enable the creation of a trajectory from one pedagogical project to another and this main question has been answered as a tentative possibility. It is seen this way because as discussed in the last section, there needs to be more work, more research before this can become more than a tentative possibility. But this work has attempted to contribute to the thinking about the possibilities of this kind of solidaristic way of working toward a goal of using pedagogical techniques in a specific way to bring about change by improving the 'sharpness' of the educative tool at several levels.

I would also argue that the thesis contributes to the thinking about research methods and the use of bricolage. The thesis has found that one of the weaknesses with bricolage is that, as Kincheloe and Berry warned, it is a lifelong pursuit, as discussed above and in Chapter 4. This thesis has been

experimental in several ways and one of those ways was to begin the bricolage and see where it took me. It has many strengths, as discussed above and in Chapter Eight, but perhaps it is not wise to begin the journey to bricoleur in doctoral study. Nonetheless, bricolage has allowed me to explore my own position in the research and in the world and it is my hope that it will contribute to the thinking of others about this kind of radical methodology.

The thesis argued overall, then, that a solidaristic grand action research type cycle may be both possible and desirable to enable pedagogical and research practices to add to the efficacy of the struggle for social justice, both within the university and outside, accepting of course, that the university may not be able to re-constitute itself as an effective site of struggle. The cornerstone of this cycle was, in the case of this work, the Social Science Centre – or at least organisations like it - so the question that arises on this issue, then, is that of whether the SSC can indeed become the linking form of organisation to bring together academics and activists (who, of course can always be one and the same), is it 'portable' enough to respond to these 'Occupy' situations and create this cornerstone of ideas shares and knowledge production? It is argued here that if the aims of the Centre were adjusted slightly, it could have the potential to be the essential 'step' that enables the grand action research type cycle to be possible. However, the main issue, that it is claimed the members of the centre are working on, but would have to be fully resolved is the tension between teacher and student. This leads me to the overall conclusion of this work: until the tension between those seen as *learned* and those seen as *learners* is resolved and it is a generally accepted principle that although some may be 'experts' in certain areas of knowledge, each and every person is both learned and

learner, or has as Rancière would put it, an equality of intelligence, the cycle of solidaristic struggle that is argued for here may never be possible. This is a first step to enable the potential enactment of a revolutionary pedagogy. This is because as was seen in all the sites, there remains this tension, which has been problematic for many years of progressive and revolutionary education, the argument here is not that this is the only tension that needs to be resolved, far from it, because as discussed in the thesis and above in this conclusion, there are many potential points at which the education being experienced becomes just another form of repressive cultural invasion, but I would argue that this tension resolution between teacher and student, learner and learned, is an important first step as it has been brought up across all three sites, it has been a generative theme, a line of continuity between them, which has been posed as a main issue that prevents the pedagogy moving from progressive toward revolutionary – and it presents as a sticking point, a tension that is enduring attempts at resolution. Therefore it may be one of the issues, if a revolutionary pedagogy is to be enacted, that requires immediate attention, before other tensions are addressed.

Coda

The two main themes that run through the Thesis: hope and bricolage, both tentative and nebulous, express my position as onlooker, as subjective, activist researcher, as human person, wishing for a world where people understand from a specific place, from a place of understanding and acceptance. A place where knowing is important and the poetics of life are the rhythm that binds us, rather than the flows of spectacle and commerce. This work is an exercise in exploring one way we might find that world.

I have understood the individuals in Occupy through my research journey – despite their words of frustration and despair, which tell a different story - to be of the same disposition. Behind the collapsing in of the paranoia, the frustration of the internal repression in the movement, a thread that ran behind their words, and filled their actions, was hope; as I sat there in those spaces, created by the camp and by our agreement to converse, I saw their eyes light up when they spoke of their triumphant experience, even months after the disillusionment set in, still, their hope was there, behind those words.

I have attempted to capture this in the theorising, whilst also attempting to honestly represent the problems, sitting, therefore, often in the interstices between hope and critique. I wanted, through Bricolage, to capture both sides of what was being told: the critique of what happened through their words but also their underlying, but ever present hope through the theory. This theorising was an ongoing part of the conversations I had with occupiers, it was theory in action, this was part of the research process, but is perhaps not adequately reflected in the text produced. This was however,

the basis for the mutually useful conversations: each of us dynamically adding to each other's knowledge and ways of knowing. But the attempt of creating a way of collectively knowing, speaking as a movement not as an individual, was, in the Thesis, the 'conversations with Occupiers' label for their voices. This I feel, on reflection, created an inequality between those that were individually named and those that were collectively named. This was a decision that made sense at the time, and was mutually agreed with the research subjects, but they may not, as I did not initially, realise the full impact of the experiment in collective story telling as a form of social knowing. In hindsight, because of the disjuncture between the individually named and the collectively named, it stripped them of individuality and status when the juxtaposition was reflected upon.

But then I wanted the Thesis to be a prefigurative exercise, like Occupy, in experimentation with form and structure, a break, in small ways, with the tradition of thesis writing.

Whilst I acknowledge that hope and critique may not necessarily be binary poles, I have attempted to set them in contrast. The work wishes to say 'I hear you, there were problems that were probably inevitable, but you had, and gave others, hope and this is the most precious 'commodity' of all'.

I wished to produce a work that allowed readers to see both sides of that happening, and gain the understanding from it that, there will always be problems, but we cannot lose the successes that still happened in spite of those problems, because it is moments of joy that allow us to continue to believe, to look forward, and to hope.

As for my methods, it is true, essentially, that Bricolage is a methodology; a way of thinking about research. But it is more; it is an ontology, a way of attempting to understand the world and the researchers' place in that world as human subject and potential change agent. Bricolage is an emotional response to the injustices and inequalities we see around us as researchers, watchers of people, it allows for sociological theorising in ways that position the researcher as 'in service' to the sometimes beaten down aspects of the research subjects accounts. In the case of this work their desires, their immense learning, their courage, and, yes, again, their hope.

Bricolage is indeed a disposition, the bricoleur has to desire, almost need, to conjure this aspect of their craft, otherwise Bricolage becomes an empty signifier, another empty label for collecting stories and freely interpreting their meaning. The Bricoleur has to understand the subtext of human activity: what is it that makes people get involved? What makes them spend their time and tolerate a questioning intrusion into their lives to say 'we did it, but this is how it went wrong'? In my understanding, the bricoleur cannot extract this and say 'yes, it went wrong' and merely represent, the bricoleur must accept the failures and voice them in their work, for sure, but add to those voices others, others who inspire people to try again, to reflect with their assistance and never lose hope.

This, in essence is what the Thesis has always been about – how can we maintain a genuine hope for the future in current times? We cannot wait, we cannot leave the changes to future generations, we have to educate ourselves and each other to understand the necessity of changing our social relations. It is my understanding, through theorising and observing, that this

cannot be done through formal institutions alone, if at all. The research indicates that it must be done on the streets, in the Social Centres, and the community halls – this is what Occupy did, what they told us.

However, they also exposed the pitfalls of this, they laid bare the problems and complexities of their experiment. They did this by talking to researchers, more than in any other way, because the people who talked to me were the people who exposed the internal problems, despite fear of retribution; they were the people who attempted to get the message out from the sometimes repressive atmosphere in the camp.

It is interesting to me that the people who gave their time and stories all had a similar message: we did something amazing, but here is how it failed and why. That message coupled with the ecstatic expression on their faces, the enthusiasm in their words, when they talked of their accomplishments, spoke to me of a hope that this 'stage' of Occupy could teach, so that others might learn. Why else bother?

My disposition as Bricoleur, sociological theorist, as desirer of change, as human subject in frightening times responded to them with this Thesis, in my own hope that it will help in some way in that learning. Hope can be infectious, but so can despair – in some ways this research has been a battle between the two and an offering of a possible trajectory out of one and into the other.

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Appendix



Publications During Ph.D. Study

CASSIE EARL

Contents

Being realistic by demanding the Impossible: Beginning the bricolage

Education and Social Change: A Theoretical Approach

Making Hope Possible: An Exploration of Moving Popular Pedagogy Forward
in Neoliberal Times from the Streets to the University.

Being realistic by demanding the Impossible: Beginning the bricolage

Earl, C. (2013) 'Being Realistic by Demanding the Impossible: Beginning the Bricolage.' *Enquire*, 8 Special Edition (1) pp. 14-36.

Abstract

In this paper, which is drawn from an educational study of The Occupy Movement (Occupy), I will argue that when studying a complex phenomenon, which is not normally associated with the 'discipline' of education, the only way to understand in depth what you are seeing; to create an authentic and rigorous interpretation of it, is to use a radical bricolage approach. I will also go on to explore the idea that the research method should mirror the phenomena that it investigates, so when studying a radical phenomenon such as Occupy, one should turn to a radical approach to research to create symmetry between object and method. I will then discuss how this is possible in the context of an early career researcher who, by necessity, can only use an unsophisticated form of bricolage due to the inexperience of the researcher at the beginning of their journey and how they can conceptualise this form of bricolage as 'radical research' in order to avoid unnecessary criticism.

A study of Occupy from an educational perspective has to be trans- and multi- disciplinary by its very nature, in order to understand how and why the movement came about and what it might teach us about education.

Bricolage, as a radical research methodology captures this nature very well,

using transdisciplinary theoretical thinking alongside a mesh of research methodologies, makes this an exceptional way to both understand and capture complexity in both object and method. The paper examines bricolage from an early research perspective and discusses what disciplines the researcher may need to draw upon for the study.

This is the beginning of my journey; these are my initial thoughts, which, in the true spirit of bricolage and critical pedagogy, will be re-read, re-written and re-thought throughout my learning journey.

In this paper, I will argue that when studying a complex phenomenon, which is not normally associated with my usual 'discipline' of education, the best way to understand in depth what you are seeing, hearing and experiencing; to create an authentic and rigorous interpretation of it, may be to use a radical²³ bricolage approach. I will also go on to explore the idea that the research method should mirror the phenomena that it investigates, so when studying a radical phenomenon such as The Occupy Movement (Occupy) as the overarching Ph.D. research here does, one should turn to a radical approach to the research process to create symmetry between object and method. I will then discuss how this is possible in the context of an early career researcher who, by necessity, can only use an unsophisticated form of bricolage due to the inexperience of the researcher at the beginning of their journey and how they can conceptualise this form of bricolage as 'radical research' in order to avoid unnecessary criticism. I am at the

²³ In this study, the word 'radical' is used in the sense of 'advocating thorough or far-reaching change' as defined by The Oxford English Dictionary. It can also be understood as a 'different way of thinking and imagining'.

beginning of this journey; these are my initial thoughts, which, in the true spirit of bricolage, the radical research methodology on which this paper is based, and critical pedagogy, the philosophy of teaching and learning upon which my practitioner and theoretical experience is entrenched, will be re-read, re-written and re-thought throughout my journey.

My Ph.D. research looks closely at the pedagogical nature of Occupy.

Occupy entered the global consciousness and vocabulary as a new social movement in 2011. It began partly inspired by the 'Arab Spring' uprisings in 2010 (Hall, 2012) and also as a response to the global financial crisis gripping the developed countries of the world (Byrne, 2012; Chomsky, 2012; Hall, 2012; Occupy London LSX, 2011b). Occupy was initially thought to have been launched in the U.S.A. by a Canadian activist magazine called *Adbusters* with their question 'are you ready for a Tahrir moment?' This exciting and popular explanation turns out to be a little less than accurate. In fact it was less spectacular and more simple; a meeting was held in New York with a multi-national group of anti-capitalist activists enthusiastically and ambitiously planning an action of physical occupation of public space that would later catch on in cities around the world (Kroll, 2011, p. 16).

Eventually, Occupy was to be seen in one form or another, usually tented occupations in city squares, in around 1500 cities around the world (Hall, 2012, p. 128). The research that this paper concentrates on, carried out for my Ph.D., is focussed on Occupy London LSX²⁴ but I have also reviewed some other actions of the global movement to get a sense of where London

²⁴ Occupy LSX was the camp outside St. Pauls Cathedral. Members of the camp have asked for it not to be referred to as Occupy St. Pauls as they feel that this de-politicises it from the original plan, to occupy Paternoster Square outside the London Stock Exchange (LSX), which was thwarted by a private security company hired by the City of London Corporation.

fits into this. Of course, all the Occupy movements are linked to learn from each other, to provide solidarity to each other and to strengthen the message about equality, justice and a better world for all peoples, Occupy London is no exception and was inspired, as were so many others, by the initial Occupy action in Wall Street, U.S.A.. The London LSX Occupy action started as a splinter group from the Trade Union demonstration against the government's austerity measures on 15 October 2011. The group occupied the square outside St. Paul's Cathedral in central London, setting up tents and later information stands, kitchens, a 'tech tent' for communications and most importantly, for this study, a people's university and library. Occupy London LSX described itself in its initial public statement as;

part of a global movement that has brought together concerned citizens from across the world, to fight against this injustice and for a new political and economic system that puts people, democracy and the environment before profit. Occupy is a grassroots' movement that values diversity and horizontality, meaning that every individual who participates stands equal to everyone else.

(Occupy London LSX, 2011a).

My research on Occupy has an educational focus, I was interested and excited to see how pedagogical the movement actually was and what we could learn about popular (peoples) education as a result of studying Occupy as an educational phenomena. The overall study is steeped in the literature of critical pedagogy (See for example Allman, 1987; Aronowitz, 1993; Darder, 2002; Freire, 1985, 1993, 2007, 2008; Freire & Faundez, 1989; Giroux, 2011; Macedo, 1993; Mayo, 2004; McLaren, 2000b, among many others) and radical adult education (for example see Brookfield, 2001; Brookfield & Holst, 2011; Holst, 2002; hooks, 1994, 2003; Newman, 2006;

The Edu-Factory Collective, 2009). This lens has turned up many exciting practices and theoretical expansions from an educational standpoint, such as the idea that learning has a natural curriculum leading to critical awakening and how powerful peer education, sparked by a common cause, can be. Critical pedagogy has much to offer the study of social movement learning. Hall (2012) reminds us that the study of social movement learning has always been in the hands of social movement and political theorists. Now, especially in light of the Occupy movement and its highly pedagogical nature, it might be better analysed in the hands of those educational theorists who are interested in the way adult learning might change our world for the better. The work of critical pedagogy, and particularly Paulo Freire, has always been about how to construct and think about education for equality and social justice. How to bring the consciousness and the voice of the people to the fore of social change and to organise education in a way that encourages and even demands critical thinking and political awareness (see particularly Freire, 1993 and his corpus of work). This is the central tenet of critical pedagogy and, of course, of social movements. If the central purpose of social movements is to bring about change as according to Snow, Soule & Kriesi (2004, p. 8) and the aim of critical pedagogy is to do the same, then critical pedagogy should be able to provide a unique insight into the process and value of social movement learning. Using this lens and observing Occupy was indicating an important educational phenomena, which begged serious analysis and study as a previously unseen form of insurrectional education and public pedagogy erupted in these tented spaces around the world. There have been new educational practices from the Occupy camps themselves (interview with member of Occupy London Education Working

Group, 2012), alongside the invitation to academics to speak about theories of revolution and economics which, for those academics have turned up some interesting surprises (Interview with Mike Neary, 2012). Even the general assemblies, visible and accessible to the public have been pedagogical in nature, encouraging, nurturing and implementing new ways of thinking and doing. At first there was no educational ideology involved in the movement at either a local or a global level (interviews with Occupiers in the UK, but globally networked), but it became clear very quickly that there was a mass recognition that education was essential to their journey as an emergent movement and that an educational approach corresponded with their demands for authentic change and a new world order (interview with member of Occupy London Education Working Group, 2012). The exciting realisation that in order to secure authentic and deep change education was needed led to knowledge from different points of view and different sources being sought (Hall, 2012; Hall, 2011), to strengthen the change they were seeking and to connect globally in solidarity. It was also clear from the beginning that, from the research point of view, this was no ordinary educational study. At Occupy London, the events, including the academics and political commentators invited and offering to speak, the very public general assemblies, the organisation of the more formal aspects of education, especially the School of Ideas working with not only within the Occupy movement itself, but also local community and youth groups were fascinating. The very reason for educational spaces being set up were incredibly complex, especially as, for the most part, those creating the spaces for education were not teachers, or educational theorists, or experts in any way, they were just people with a passion to learn and an

understanding of the necessity of education in their current context (interview with Occupy London Education Working Group Member, 2012). An additional ingredient that made the study of the educational and pedagogical aspects of Occupy ever more complex was that those who were involved in education *previously* had a very different idea of what was being learned and how, than those who had no expertise at all. I saw a reluctance from those previously involved to let go of the notion that one could only learn from the transference of knowledge from 'experts', competing with the more generally held belief that they were all learning all the time and that this collective learning was a vital part of the whole experience (data from interviews with Occupiers, London LSX). There was obviously a massive amount of ambiguity in the reasoning behind the education of the individuals involved.

The situation, from a research point of view, required some unpacking regarding why people were partaking in 'education' at all; one might imagine that when sleeping in a tent on freezing streets in order to bring attention to a political crisis, education would be the last thing one might feel was important. Protest has always been about primarily bringing attention to a cause or event, but most commonly to grab the attention of the government or actor to whom you are giving demands, or to prick up the ears of those not involved in order to recruit them to your cause (Rancière, 2010, p. 7).

Therefore, in contrast to the question of how the education became so politicised, Occupy threw up the question of how politics became so educational. A project that has been called for by Giroux (2011, p.71) who insists that as education is always a political act, we need to reinvigorate political agency and therefore democracy by carrying out our education consciously as a political practice, creating the conditions for the political to

become more pedagogical. It is how to encompass all the levels that were being observed, creating a complex research problem, that this paper is attempting to explore.

Already, we see three (at least) areas, or disciplines, of study; we need to understand the educational, the political, and the theory of social movements. There is more, should we wish to see it; the reactions of the public, the media, the government and the police, how have these factors impacted on what is being learnt and how? Now we have to consider issues such as public pedagogy, what is the public learning from the movement? Media theories of how the reporting of them might influence movements and protests, and indeed how the movement is using media itself and how does this use affect the nature of the education being practiced, both internally and externally? I would even argue, in the context of Occupy worldwide, that we could not rule out at least a cursory glance at the study of state terror as a curriculum for public pedagogy. Occupy also asserts a necessity for philosophical inquiry both about and within itself, but also as a research tool. According to Badiou (Badiou & Žižek, 2009, p. 5) Occupy is a philosophical situation as he insists that 'a philosophical situation consists in the moment when a choice is elucidated. A choice of existence or a choice of thought'.

So with all this complexity at work it becomes very easy to argue for a research methodology that takes complexity into account, that allows for radical research strategies and philosophical inquiry, and that respects all the conditions of human life. A radical form of bricolage definitely seems to fit the context. Kincheloe and Berry's explanation is worth quoting at length:

What the bricolage is dealing with in this context is a double ontology of complexity: first, the complexity of objects of inquiry and their being-

in-the-world; second, the nature of the social construction of human subjectivity, the production of human 'being'. Such an understanding opens a new era of social research where the process of becoming human agents is appreciated to a new level of sophistication. The complex feedback loop between an unstable social structure and the individual can be charted in a way that grants human beings insight into the means by which power operates and the democratic process is subverted. In this complex ontological view, bricoleurs understand that social structures do not *determine* individual subjectivity but *constrain* it in remarkably intricate ways. The bricolage is acutely interested in developing and employing a variety of strategies to help specify the ways subjectivity is shaped.

(Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 74, original stress)

The above quote from Kincheloe and Berry not only describes very well the art and interests of the bricolage, but also unintentionally raises the questions my research is interested in about Occupy. How the individuals involved are imagining a way to be human. How are they being-in-the-world whilst involved in the camps? What is the nature of the feedback loop between what is a very unstable and artificially constructed society and its individual members? In addition, how is power, from both internal and external sources, operating to subvert the democratic processes and what are they doing to combat this? Moreover, from a predominately-educational point of view, how are their subjectivities about their actions and their being-in-the-world being developed and de/re-constructed? This is a fundamental consideration from a critical pedagogy point of view, where the raising of a subjective critical consciousness is central to the educational process and learners need to re-read the world in a way that enables them to understand their power to change it. Alongside this, an exploration of the context and historicity of Occupy has to be included to understand fully how they came to be, why here, why now. What issues and power struggles are at play that created the unique conditions for the insurrectional eruption? These

questions are not value-neutral, nor is the researcher who is situated in the melee of the war of words, the political struggle and the imaginings of outcomes. The questions have to be asked and an attempt at answers has to be sought because this is a situation that could lead to a great many, potentially world changing outcomes, particularly when viewed on the global scale that these movements that encompass Occupy seem to be operating. Old theory has to be questioned and new theory generated because we have to create tools to understand, to support and to move forward and as Whitehead and McNiff (2006, p. 28) remind us, 'theory generation is far from neutral, but is a deeply politicized practice'. Therefore the research has to take sides in a foray such as this one, indicating a radical form of research from a radical political standpoint; 'radical research in social contexts implies a radical politics because it raises questions that make the powerful feel uncomfortable, even threatened' (Žižek, 2009, p. 1) .

One of the advantages of using bricolage in this context is that it enables the use of insight by concurrently drawing on a multitude of discourses concerning the subject under investigation and questioning their assumptions. Thus allowing the researcher to discern the ways in which these assumptions have shaped what we think we know throughout history (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). This becomes particularly important when studying a phenomenon that is unparalleled throughout history (Chomsky, 2012; Easthope, 1988; Foust, 2010). There have of course been occupations, uprisings, revolutions, protests, including protest camps before, but Occupy has a seemingly global solidarity. A 'personality' that seems unique in protest and revolt, and a distinct pedagogical and educational underpinning that calls for a considered insurrection, not the peasant revolts

of the Russian and French revolutions. A peaceful, non-violent, cultural revolution, with shades of the Cuban campaigns, without the taking up of arms (Belsey, 2002; Calhoun, 2011; Coté, Day & de Peuter, 2007). There are similarities with the actions led by Mahatma Gandhi to overthrow the oppression of the British Empire in India with the use of non-violence against the violence of the state. The epistemologies of all these past insurrectional acts are called into the complexity of trying to understand Occupy. Finding the questions not asked or answered in past protests and revolutions becomes an imperative of the research act in order to understand the object of inquiry. This project is already begun by the research intruding into the realm of political and social movement theorists and studying the phenomenon from an education starting point.

As Bricolage, in a contemporary sense, is understood to involve 'the process of employing multiple methodological processes *as they are needed in the unfolding context* of the research situation' (Kincheloe, *et al*, 2011, p. 168, stress added), it is particularly pertinent to Occupy, as in addition to situating the movement historically with past insurrections and protests, the very conditions under study are themselves unfolding as the research period continues. My first fieldwork interviews were conducted at Occupy LSX just days before they were due at their first eviction hearing, the second round of face-to-face was just after their second when they were always expecting a call from the bailiffs. The conditions of Occupy were, and continue to be, so volatile as to possibly, in the final analysis, render everything I thought I understood about the movement null and void. There have already been four distinct permutations of the movement: a camp, an internet presence, 'pop-up' protests, including 'teach-outs', and an education provider, and even

more in the global context. Analysing what Occupy is and what it can tell us about education is therefore a complex matter requiring multiple strategies of inquiry and allowing for change and flexibility at any point.

According again to Kincheloe *et al.* (2011, p. 164) bricolage can be thought of as critical research which is understood best in 'the context of the empowerment of individuals'. This type of research endeavours to confront the injustice within a public sphere so that the research becomes 'unembarrassed' to be called and to call itself 'political' and unafraid to consummate a relationship with emancipatory consciousness, thus becoming a transformative endeavour. Therefore bricolage is not only concerned with the academic act of research but also with the wider effect of which research is capable. As McLaren (2000b, p. 11) maintains the world and its social systems should be approached as *created* and *transformable* realities which are constantly in the process of being shaped and made along with the individuals embedded in them, by human interaction and acts that are guided by ideological representations of reality. This is a fundamental assumption for any radical research strategy and for Occupy itself. If the world and its social systems are created and transformable then Occupy could, *theoretically*, achieve their mission of authentic transformation of the social consciousness and economic system and a radical research project could indeed consummate a relationship with them to assist that endeavour.

Our social scientific understanding about the world around us comes from our research and our understanding shapes our policy and our behaviour toward others, bricolage has the potential to create a scientific and rigorous understanding that could lead to wide reaching transformation because of its

respect for complexity and human experience. Denzin (2010, p.35), in his passionately written *Qualitative Manifesto* pertinently asks '...what does science mean in the current moment, and whose science is it anyway?'. Many believe that the social and political future is wide open in the current moment with solidarity insurrections taking place globally, perhaps then, there is an opportunity to transform social 'science' along with the possible transference of power advocated by many involved in Occupy? To make social science a practice of the people, rather than confined to the prestige of the elite few? In order to do this, social science has to take into account the complexity of all aspects of the lived experience and every person has to become critically aware in order to practice it, yet in their practice of social science, their criticality grows creating a society of public intellectuals, or an intellectual public. These are the parallels between the potential of bricolage and what it, as a methodology, could achieve and the potential of the object under study: the educational potential of Occupy. The transference of power and the transference of the practice of social science to the masses from their elite strongholds may be utopian goals, but both are worthy of a moment in the imaginary of those whose research seeks emancipation and is concerned with social justice. It is also imperative in bricolage that one believes in what one is doing, in this case accessing and putting into motion the transformative and emancipatory effects of a research act. As Žižek (2009, p.3) puts it, anyone who only imagines that they believe in themselves and what they are doing loses the 'performative power' of what they are doing and the act becomes empty. Bricolage, as a political research act must not be allowed to become an empty signifier of what it aims to be.

If the bricoleur does indeed believe in what they are doing and the empty signifier is avoided then the performative act of bricolage is an ethical pursuit. Ethics are inbuilt into bricolage so long as it is performed correctly, that is, as long as it does seek to consummate the relationship between the research and the emancipatory consciousness. The key in all the elements of this research, and it could be suggested, any research, which would make it successful, is honesty. Denzin (2010, p.36) insists that the bricoleur tests their interpretations against 'the most severe criteria of all – does it work or not; that is, does it advance a social justice initiative?'. If it does and this initiative matches that of the emancipatory initiative under investigation, then it is an ethical practice in itself. Freire's ideas on politics matched this sentiment as McLaren (2000a, p. 14) explains; Freire's

politics of liberation resists subsumption under a codified set of universal principles: rather it animates a set of ethical imperatives that together serve as a precipitate of our answering the call of the other who is suffering of heavy heart. Such imperatives do not mark a naïve utopian faith in the future; rather, they presage a form of active, irreverent, and uncompromising hope in the possibilities of the present.

The researcher practicing bricolage should answer this call, to take the people's active, irreverent and uncompromising hope further, to act as ally and critical friend. Once this is realised by the bricoleur, the necessity for any discussion on ethics becomes all but moot. The interesting point on ethics from Kincheloe and Berry (2004) is not what they have said in their book on bricolage in education, but that they have not explicitly included a discussion on ethics at all. As long as the researcher is honest about their purpose, their motives and where their allegiances lie then any legalistic discussion on ethics with the individuals participating in the inquiry becomes patronising

and paternal. Occupy have no obligation to enter this legalistic discourse with me, to allow me to participate in their activities, so what makes mine so elite as to warrant this from them? Their consent has been informed. I have been honest with those who have agreed to partake in my meaning-making. They know who I am, how to contact me and they have written information explaining their rights concerning my research. However, we are concomitant, they are my comrades not my subjects, we understand that this is mutual participation in each other's activities. I believe I have met Denzin's (2010, p.122) list of ethical practices, I have

Strived to use an informed consent model; strived for intellectual honesty; strived never to do harm, to always tell as much truth as I can, to exhibit compassion and care, to enact a pedagogy and ethic of love, to practice an ethic of equity and a social ethic of resistance.

So, all this considered, just how does an idealistic researcher at the start of their career become a bricoleur? Kincheloe *et al.* (2004; 2011) suggests that bricolage is a lifelong pursuit, as one must become proficient in multiple theoretical ideas and multiple research methodologies as well as have a rigorous understanding of the writings of the 'esteemed philosophers'. This insight, understanding and potentially unbounded knowledge is indeed an impossible goal on a doctoral programme, so how and where to start in this context? If one is a natural bricoleur, one will ask 'why should science be done this way or that? Why should I ignore this epistemology in favour of that, even though they both have something to teach me?' (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). One explanation of how an early career researcher can become bricoleur comes from Freire (1998, p. 30) when he suggests that the answer is to develop one's epistemological curiosity. Research is learning

and if one exercises one's capacity for learning critically, rather than merely following a doctrine, or narrow research paradigm, the more one will develop their epistemological curiosity. Freire argues that without the development of the epistemological curiosity, it is not possible to 'obtain a complete grasp of the object of our knowledge'. Research carried out under a bricolage approach aims to 'grasp' fully the object of our knowledge by any means of understanding possible. Therefore, epistemological curiosity is an essential ingredient for the bricoleur, the desire to rigorously know and understand. To really, truly, rigorously know and understand, surely, one has to delve into many different academic disciplines and use multiple methods of inquiry, which is the beginning of bricolage.

According to Denzin (2010) and Kincheloe *et al.* (2011, p. 168), the French word 'bricoleur' relates to a person who makes use of whatever tools are available to complete a task. Kincheloe *et al.* go on to say that 'bricolage implies the fictive and imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research'. If we use these elements to look at Occupy as an educational site, we can see that a curriculum of change is unfolding in the streets. Occupy London have initiated 'level playing field' discussions with those who would normally be at arm's reach inside the academy. They have set up workshops on non-violent protest, taking the teachings of Ghandi, Gramsci, Alinski and others as inspiration. There are classes on economics, revolutionary movements and even how to write protest songs all of which took place in an occupied building that had lain derelict for some time. They have learnt how to do this along the way, using each other's expertise and experience to create a knowledgeable collective. So as an early career researcher this is surely where to start, taking a lead from the Occupy movement and starting

with the tools we as individuals have at hand, alongside those we can borrow from 'others'. Adding the fictive and imaginative elements we all possess as creative beings allowing for speculative theory generation, and lastly with the things we know best: in my case critical pedagogy. Kincheloe *et al.* (2011, p. 167) would agree with me: 'it is with our understanding and our commitment to critical social research and critical pedagogy that we identify the bricolage as an emancipatory research construct'.

It is interesting to hear what Denzin has to say on this matter:

we interpret, we perform, we interrupt, we challenge, and we believe nothing is ever certain. We want performance texts that quote history back to itself, texts that focus on epiphanies, on the intersection of biography, history, culture and politics, turning point moments in people's lives. The critics are correct on this point. We have a political orientation that is radical, democratic and interventionist.

(Denzin, 2010, p. 38)

What Denzin has to say here fits with both the philosophy contained within the works of Paulo Freire (Freire, 1985, 1993, 1998, 2004, 2008) and within other work on critical pedagogy (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000; Giroux, 2011; Lankshear, Peters & Knobel, 1996; McLaren, 2000b). Therefore, as a starting point, a critical pedagogy framework from which to assimilate and explore other knowledges, epistemologies and paradigms seems to be appropriate. As Freire (1993, p. 53) himself said, 'knowledge only emerges through invention and reinvention, through the relentless, impatient, continuing, hopeful, inquiry human beings pursue in the world, and with each other', this surely, is bricolage and, surely, this is Occupy.

There are many parallels between bricolage, particularly as described by Kincheloe *et al.* (2011), and critical pedagogy. As Kincheloe *et al.* explain, the use of pre-existing guidelines and checklists is avoided if it does not enhance the study, and a more active role for all the people involved in the study is sought in order to shape the reported 'reality', the narratives contained within it and the research process itself. Critical pedagogy has never been a method but an adaptive philosophy or strategy for education and the authentic participation of the student is imperative for success. Kincheloe *et al.* (2004; 2011) argue that this type of active agency within the research leads to a rejection of any form of deterministic view of social reality, avoids assumed effects of particular social, political, economic and educational processes which in turn allows for creativity and critical awakening, or as Freire called it, conscientization (Freire, 1993).

Critics may argue that this allows for only a partial view of the 'reality' of the situation, particularly when those taking an active role are members of a movement like Occupy, that voices from other perspectives will be disavowed in the process. However, Žižek (2009, p.6 original stress) argues forcibly that a partial account is better than an impartial one because he says that '*truth is partial*, accessible only when one takes sides, and is no less universal for this reason'. Whitehead and McNiff (2006, p. 58) concur, when, although talking about the teaching act, they state that 'when an educator aims to influence, they do so in the clear understanding that what they are trying to communicate will inevitably be filtered through the creative imagination of the other'. If we are taking the view that research is learning and the dissemination of research is teaching, then this idea is applicable in a research context. Žižek's stance also compliments the consistent

philosophy of Freire for whom context was the all-important measure of what could be known. And from a bricolage point of view contributing to social transformation means better understanding the forces of domination that affect the lives and worldviews of individuals outside of dominant cultures, not objectively taking into account the view of a whole range of people and standpoints. Thus, there should be an attempt to remove knowledge production from the control of elite groups and commit the knowledge work of the bricoleur to helping address the ideological and informational needs of marginalized groups. At present one could assume that Occupy is a marginalised group, especially in the U.K. as the government and the press either vilifies them or ignores them, a measure of marginalisation in most opinions. Kincheloe *et al.* (2004; 2011) insist that as 'detectives of subjugated insight', bricoleurs eagerly learn from 'insurrections against colonialism', which creates a symmetry between methodology and object of study.

Another area of symmetry exists between Freire's thinking about education and that of the implementation of education throughout the global Occupy movement. It was a fundamental belief of Freire's that the purpose of education is not the transference of knowledge from one person to a class of students but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge (Freire, 1998, p. 30). This is essentially what Occupy have done, created the conditions. Even when an eminent theorist or commentator has been invited to speak, it has been on the understanding of equal status for all. Moreover, the initial education has happened through forms of direct democracy, through trial and error with every voice heard. Occupy tried to apply direct democracy and found it could easily be corrupted or even

counterproductive in terms of making decisions and getting things done. This created the conditions for learning, as they were then able, due to the ethos of equality and participation, to discuss what democracy meant and how it could serve them best and for what purposes it was to be used, the education went on from there. This ethos of Occupy and critical pedagogy coincides with the fundamentals of philosophical inquiry, the inventing of new questions (Badiou & Žižek, 2009), and the intention of bricolage, the creating of new knowledge (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). Therefore, we can see that Occupy, bricolage and critical pedagogy have much to offer each other, especially when laced with philosophical insight. They also have much to offer the researcher wanting to begin the journey to become bricoleur. In fact, one might go so far as to argue that for the scholar of critical pedagogy, especially when studying a phenomenon such as Occupy, bricolage is the only research methodology that makes any sense, as in Freire's (1998, p. 89) words, 'our teaching space is a text that has to be constantly read, interpreted, written and re-written. In this sense, the more solidarity there is between teacher and students in the way that this space is mutually used, the more possibilities for democratic learning will be opened up in the school'. If we now think of the teaching space as metaphor for the research act and for the insurrectional actions of Occupy, it unveils a relationship between the three elements of this research; methodology, education and the protest space.

Denzin (2010, p.34) offers the view that to begin this kind of research we need a broad-based framework which can travel from 'theories of critical pedagogy, to views of performance as intervention, interruption and resistance'. A form of research that seeks a form of praxis that 'inspires the

oppressed persons to act upon their utopian impulses'. This is the emancipatory aspect spoken of above, coupled with those fictive and imaginative aspects Kincheloe mentioned earlier, but now with a solidarity for those under study, those Denzin here calls oppressed persons, those which this research identifies as the Occupy Movement and in Occupy's phraseology, the 99%. It is perhaps a little unusual to think of a political or social movement as oppressed peoples but it was a distinct level of oppression around the world that gave rise to the movement in the first place, and they have certainly been oppressed by the state since they started, so I would argue the description fits. The solidarity that the research can show with the movement is summed up here by Žižek (2009, p.17) when he insists that 'we should control our fury and transform it into an icy determination to think – to think things through in a really radical way, and to ask what kind of a society it is that renders such blackmail possible²⁵'. The research commits to 'thinking things through in a really radical way'. The members of Occupy are creating a form of what Giroux (2011, p. 6) has called 'a discourse of educated hope', but the research, through a bricolage methodology, can take that discourse a stage further, with further rigour, time for reflection and deep interrogation of the context, coupled with a philosophical view into what is and what could be. As Žižek (2009, p.92) has said, writing before the emergence of Occupy, 'a new emancipatory politics will stem no longer from a particular social agent, but from an explosive combination of different agents' - and the bricoleur can be one of them.

²⁵ The blackmail Žižek is talking about is the global financial crisis and the national debts that have resulted.

So if we return to the notion of creating at first a framework for analysis from the philosophies of critical pedagogy, with an eye on bricolage as our destination we can at least begin the journey to bricoleur and our research project. Kincheloe *et al.* (2004; 2011) insist that bricoleurs understand that researchers' interactions with objects of their inquiries, are always unpredictable, and, of course, complex. He argues that these conditions negate planning research strategies in advance and that bricoleurs enter into the research act as methodological negotiators. Having had personal experience of several political movements; the 'who's who' of how to and how not to encourage people to your cause, I had no idea what I would find outside St. Pauls when I first went. Was I about to enter a closed community full of cliques and professional activists? Would I find a desperate bunch of 'black block anarchists' bent on violence and destruction as the press had suggested? Alternatively, would I find 'ordinary' people committed to extraordinary acts? Therefore having a loose framework, such as critical pedagogy, means that as long as the researcher can trust his or her own insight as to what is needed at any point, the research can commence. This is because the researcher understands that critical pedagogy enthusiastically emphasises that attention be paid to context of those under study and the construction of generative themes designed to tap into issues that are important to those involved. Thus, the disciplinary articulation of what was carried out can be left until there is time for reflection and deeper thought, with only a surface level of multi - methodological knowledge. Already we see that an idea, that of generative themes, is consistent with the methods of analysis used in grounded theory research (Bryant & Charmaz, 2010) in order to reach what is known as data saturation. Data saturation ensures that

the researcher has uncovered the core of the phenomenon or issue under investigation, in order to make interpretive theory about it. This could indeed be useful in the study written about here as the themes contained within Occupy are, at least at first look, seemingly chaotic and not hierarchical. The appropriate way to reach data saturation might be to do interviews, but what kind of interview would be most applicable? If we turn to the ethnographic tradition, we see a whole host of different interview data-collection techniques. However, when the researcher has limited time because their fieldwork site is about to radically change (in the case of Occupy an eviction of the site was looming) it was important to capture what the individuals interviewed wanted to tell me around a theme. Because what I actually found at Occupy was a very welcoming group of people, respectful of what I was doing and happy to engage in any debate or discussion a person wished to have, I employed an interview technique that Wolcott (2008, p. 55) describes as 'casual conversation', which in terms of a critical pedagogy approach could be construed as a 'constructed conversation'. This conversation was themed in that it began with an inquiry into what the interviewee had learned from their experience and how had it been learned, and continued from there. It was essential for me to ensure that the voice of the interviewee was louder in the process than mine because as Denzin (2010, p. 216) reminds us 'as researchers, we belong to a moral community. Doing interviews is a privilege granted us, not a right that we have'. I agree further when he goes on to insist that 'interviews are part of the dialogic conversation that connects all of us to the larger moral community. Interviews arise out of performance events. They transform information into shared experience'. In addition, if we are careful not to impose our own ideology onto the tone of the interview they

can indeed 'criticize the world the way it is and offer suggestions of how it could be different', which is definitely the aim of the bricoleur and of Occupy.

This is again where perhaps we need to add philosophical inquiry into the art of bricolage, because as Badiou (Badiou & Žižek, 2009) says there is a philosophical situation when there is a relation where there is seemingly no relationship, or where there is a need to throw light on the value of exception. This is where we may need the philosopher to cast their eye and offer explanation. At first glance we may naïvely ask what is the relationship between the protest camp demanding social change and the education of individuals, or at least the person being interviewed may, they may not have examined this relationship, this experience, critically or philosophically. The ethnographic interviews may throw up a mass of contradictions, especially if we use bricolage to circumnavigate disciplinary parochialism when analysing the transcripts. How can we be the 99%, personified and real *and* support a group like Anonymous? How can Occupy have the feeling of making progress without declaring an allegiance to a political ideology? How can a leaderless group lead the world into a new world order? As we are attempting to uncover the unaskable questions about creating a world that 'exists not yet' (Holloway, 2010) and produce the unknowable knowledge that leads to the creation of new meaning and imaginative epistemologies, we need indeed to throw some light on the value of this experienced exception, to look philosophically at the value of the described event.

One may ask at this point, with the introduction of the idea of the usefulness of ethnographic inquiry, what is the difference between ethnography and bricolage? Many authors have described ethnography as a research

paradigm that borrows from others and uses a mix of methodologies to suit its purpose (Gunn, 1989; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006; Wolcott, 2008).

Although as Hobbs (1989, p. 101) states, ethnography is a 'cocktail of methodologies' aimed at understanding a particular culture or social setting and that *description* 'resides at the core of ethnography', he also says that meaning from the 'everyday perspective' of those understood is sought. In this study, nothing is 'everyday' and therefore what could be described as an extension to this description of ethnography is sought. Kozinets (2011, p. 59) insists that ethnography is grounded in context, similar to bricolage, 'it is infused with, and imbues, local knowledges of the particular and specific'.

How then is bricolage different from ethnography as 'any given ethnography already combines multiple methods' and 'is based on adaptation or *bricolage*; its approach is continually being refashioned to suit particular fields of scholarship, research questions, research sites, times, researcher preferences, skill sets, methodological innovations, and cultural groups' (p. 60, original stress). Kozinets goes on to express that ethnography means to take an 'immersive, prolonged engagement with the members of a culture or community followed by an attempt to understand and convey their reality *that is familiar to its participants but strange to outsiders*' (stress added).

This study was unable to take an 'immersive, prolonged engagement' due to the volatile nature of the fieldwork site as described above and therefore needed something that did not require the full immersion that ethnography might demand. There is also difference in the notion of familiarity to the participants that we see some difference but never fully part ways with ethnography. Bricolage takes the description and understanding one-step further and through the combination of politicisation, philosophical

interpretation and problematizing of the way things are, bricolage manages to make the familiar unfamiliar because of its focus, gained through its relationship with critical pedagogy, on helping to create change. As Bahruth and Steiner (2000) would say, it reveals the waters in which we swim. Bricolage allows us to illicit change through an unravelling of reality, rather than an explanation or understanding of it. By using the multiple techniques in a creative, rather than a compliant manner, bricolage politicises and problematizes what others might merely seek to describe, understand and explain.

There are other research tools and ontologies that will become useful during the period of this research, I am sure, and as Denzin (2010, p. 36) reminds us, no method or approach should be unexplored or ignored, especially if it helps 'illuminate a situation, process or issue'. The bricoleur is obligated to read widely across theoretical, methodological and ethical positions and must take their own learning as a defensible starting point when beginning with bricolage. They must be adaptable and flexible enough to be ready to perform multiple tasks and go beyond what may normally be expected of a doctoral student. The Ph.D. student-bricoleur must not become jack-of-all-trades and master of none, an easy cul-de-sac to stray down, but must try instead to set realistic goals for the scope of their research whilst remaining true to the ethos of bricolage, this is not an easy task. But to aim for that discourse of educated hope, spoken of above, one has to take the paths that present themselves and enjoy the ride. In Schostak and Schostak (2008), the image of the methodologist as hitchhiker or skateboarder is used to signify the 'wandering through' and making multiple meanings, connections and association which in the research act become knowledge. I like this image,

this 'metaphor plus' as it conjures up the feeling I had when sitting in the freezing cold weather at St. Paul's Cathedral in February, carrying out fieldwork and seeing the complexity of the scene being played out in front of me. I will never lose those images. They changed me as a researcher and a person, the associations made in my mind, the way those scenes changed the way I view the world will stay with me. I cannot undo or extract the political from the educational, the context from the people, I cannot un-know what I know, I can never be sanitised for the next piece of research, those events will always be 'drawn into other imaginaries for other agendas' (p.187), not just for me but for everyone who passed through that space.

I was hitchhiker on those days, hitchhiker in the world of the other, for whom I felt solidarity, sympathy and hope, with whom I had to take sides. For whom the context and the complexity mattered. It is true that 'methodology is not naively about knowledge but about love, death and subjection' (Schostak & Schostak, 2008, p. 42) . However, as a Ph.D. researcher, once that space, that context was left and my own context intruded into my schema, I became hitchhiker on the juggernaut of theories, ideas, philosophies... rushing through the landscape, picking up what time will allow, prone to missing some detail in the attempt to record them all, playing at the edges.

When you start to think about research through bricolages' multiple lens the task seems so daunting. Therefore, at first, because you understand that the object of your inquiry is part of a historically situated complex system, and not an encapsulated static phenomenon (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 73), the best way for a researcher at this point in their career is to accept the ontology but prioritise where the lens falls in order to grasp a starting point.

This may sound as if it is not bricolage at all but, because mastering the bricolage is a lifelong pursuit, one has to start somewhere. As long as the researcher acknowledges that this is what they are doing and accepts that their interpretation of any social action is an individually defined snapshot of that action due to the nature of the researchers own situatedness, then the researcher is beginning to think like the bricoleur.

In conclusion, from the findings of the study of both bricolage as methodology and Occupy as research subject, conclusions are not the end point, but rather actions for change. It is not the job of this bricolage research to defend or criticise the 'effectiveness' of the phenomena under study. Revolutions do not happen overnight and as MacKenzie (2011) tells us, even if you are still convinced the Occupy movement is a waste of time, 'no matter, the hacking of your consciousness has begun', so only time will tell. However, the point of the Occupy movement worldwide was to prefigure some kind of change, and the same can easily be said for bricolage, radical research and critical pedagogy. Bricolage creates a radical action research for social change, it may be described as the scientific methodology of social action and as Marx once famously said, 'The philosophers [and here we might include much social science research] have only interpreted the world, in various ways: the point, however, is to change it' (Marx & Engels, 1846/2007).

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Education and Social Change: A Theoretical Approach

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Education has long been a tool of the state wherein the ideology of the day has manipulated and controlled the policy and curriculum of schooling (see for example Dewey, 1997; Gatto, 2009; Giroux, 2001, 2011; Leonardo, 2006; Macrine, 2009a; McLaren, 1995; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2005; McLaren & Jaramillo, 2007). The situation, many believe, cannot continue if we are ever to gain control over our own lives and social relations locally, nationally and globally. This has led to a new movement where the pedagogical has become the essence of the movement, a turnaround from protests and demands to a new awakening of critical consciousness where knowledge has become the movements and education forms the basis of a new pedagogy where people are the project rather than the resource of human experience and social production. This movement can inform resistance education at all levels.

In this chapter, I shall explore the ideas about education for social change and how this thinking can inform those at grass roots level hoping to re-engage with a system of schooling that is failing their children. This exploration will cover theories of critical pedagogy and the idea of emancipatory education, including the collective and individual responses and responsibilities that are needed to ensure the best for our children and to turn schools around. The chapter will not cover individual models of schooling as that can be found elsewhere in this volume, but will, however, suggest aims of education and where this matches with models, they will be indicated.

It is important, then, to understand what is meant by education as resistance outside the context of these solely political movements and into the classrooms and communities around the country, and indeed the world. In finding this explanation it is useful to turn to the theories of critical pedagogy to explore how these battles outside the classroom can be useful to those concerned with the conditions inside. The first task is to question the purpose of education and to dispel the myth of full employment on acquisition of GCSE's or 'A' levels, or even higher education qualifications (Jones, 1992) and begin a process of the reimagining of education as a form of resistance against the injustices and inequalities that exist in society and that education can reproduce and perpetuate (Gatto, 2009; Harber, 2004).

So what and how should we resist? Our resistance needs to be a resistance of the brutality of the systems of social relations under which we live (Allman, 2001; Giroux, 2001; Holloway, 2005, 2010; Macrine, 2009b). But also, and most importantly for our purpose here, resistance to the forms of education

which attempt to produce people who, whether it suits them or not, are required to 'fit in.' To fit in to the social structures that reproduce, and often extend, the inequalities and social roles 'expected' of them because of their 'starting points,' both inside the education system and beyond. In other words, resistance to the violence of capitalist schooling (Harber, 2004). Illich (2011) comments that within our system, young people are taught to substitute hope with expectation, and for some young people those expectations can be set pretty low, whether they are capable of more or not. Hope is a powerful tool of resistance (de Ruyter, 2006; Freire, 1998, 2007) and turning around this replacement of expectation for hope is one of the cornerstones of this kind of resistance.

For a long time the Right have understood the power of education, and it seems have been very successful in utilising it as a tool of subjugation and control (Apple, 2000; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Heaney, 2000; McLaren, 1998). It seems that the Left have not caught onto this until recently, this catching on however has not come from the institutions of mass education (with a few exceptions, for example see Neary, 2012), but from small groups of people and collectives who are taking it upon themselves to become educated for themselves (see for example Bigelow, 2011; Coté, et al., 2007; Neary & Amsler, 2012; Neary & Winn, 2012). We have much to learn from them as education practitioners, theorists and communities of parents and concerned individuals in all levels of educational provision. We also need to take their theoretical explorations and adapt them for the introduction of a new paradigm in schooling.

First we need to identify the damaging, or potentially damaging discourses contained in our schooling system (Apple, 1979; Gatto, 2009; Harber, 2004), especially when those discourses are presented as promoting inclusion and 'equality'. One of these discourses is that schooling asks the obviously unequal to fit into their 'system of equality' (Coleman, 2006; Schostak, 2011), can there be anything worse in education than trying to make the obviously unequal equal? Which is where, perhaps, our discourse should begin to move away from that of equality toward a discourse of educational justice, otherwise, the discourses in equality can become what Paulo Freire termed 'cultural invasion':

"Cultural invasion, which like divisive tactics and manipulation also serves the ends of conquest. In this phenomenon, the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter's potentialities; they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression" (Freire, 1993: 133)

In other words, the 'equality of opportunity' that we have long been promised in education can be seen as a form of cultural invasion, in that, where ever you begin, educationally speaking, you have the same, standardized opportunities. This is perhaps most famously evident in the cultural and class bias of I.Q. tests or the 11+ examinations of the grammar school era (Greenfield, 1997; Lareau & McNamara Horvat, 1999). So in order to fight the cultural invasion in our school system and move toward a discourse of social justice we need a re-evaluation of what education is and what its purposes are. This will then enable us to begin to change the vast inequalities and low expectations that our education system produces.

The idea of finding an educational model that 'fits all' is at best problematic and at worst just another form of cultural invasion. Any 'one size fits all', standardising model, becomes a form of repression to those who are not 'standard' for that model. So choosing the most flexible model of schooling becomes paramount. It is important to remember that the purposes of education are by no means agreed or incontestable (Dadds, 2001: 48), which gives educators and parents a mandate to reinvent education for the better. Another essential criteria when thinking about the most appropriate form of education is that "humans are emotional beings and the emotions are central to any learning process" (Ollis, 2012: 216), especially if one wishes to create an education that re-organises social relationships in order to establish a more collective and communitarian outlook in those experiencing that system of education. Therefore, any 'model' of education you may wish to apply to your context must consider this essential understanding. Perhaps then, it is acceptable to argue for a model of education that is emancipatory, as this should allow the emotive nature of students to come through and allow them to learn 'to be' in a way that is not only good for them, but also good for society. Certainly, from a critical education point of view this stands, as, "an emancipatory education is essential not only to empower people, but also for them to become subjects of their world" (Cho, 2013: 127). In fact, the ultimate aim of any emancipatory pedagogy is to *change the world* through emancipatory education, this is an agreed goal in many forms of critical education, as it is often felt that individual emancipation and empowerment is not enough. Individual emancipation and empowerment can serve to increase feelings of displacement and disillusion, as, if we are not also

changing the world through the emancipation of those who are currently subjugated, then these people will 'mis-fit' for yet another reason. In this case we may be creating, even more, a class of people who, although they have a voice, they have no one to hear it and are therefore emotionally displaced within society. At first glance this seems to support the 'building bridges to nowhere' criticism, as discussed by Illich (2011): the criticism goes as such; if we create thinking, critical young people, individually empowered and emancipated, without first changing the political and economic system in order for them to 'fit' into a pre-existing structure that tolerates such amazing people, then we are 'building bridges to nowhere'. However, Illich's answer to this criticism is that the asker is underestimating the fundamental political and economic nature of schooling as well as the political potential inherent in any change to it. Further to this, Holloway (2010: 12) tells us that

“social change is not produced by activists, however important activism may (or may not) be in the process. Social change is rather the outcome of the barely visible transformation of the daily lives and activities of millions of people. We must look beyond activism, then, to the millions and millions of refusals and other-doings, the millions and millions of cracks that constitute the material base of possible radical change”

In this sense, education becomes one of the 'refusals', the 'other-doings' of Holloway's argument. It is arguable whether any activity that promotes social change however big or small should or should not be called 'activism', but that is for a different discussion. The point is that political activism *alone* may not change society in any fundamental way and that it is the responsibility of every person to live their life in opposition, or in refusal of the things that they see as harmful to their quality of life and opportunities for personal growth.

My question, therefore, to those who criticise in this way, would be who is going to change the political and economic system *for* these young people? And what do we do in the meantime? Keep selling them short? Conditioning them out of criticality and imagination? Keep telling them they will never amount to anything so that they passively accept their fate when they leave school?

Apple, Au & Gandin (2009: 3, original stress) insist that

“in order to understand and act on education in its complicated connections to the larger society, we must engage in the process of *repositioning*. That is, we must see the world through the eyes of the dispossessed and act against the ideological and institutional processes that reproduce oppressive conditions.”

There are many strands in all our lives where we can actively resist oppressive conditions, and education is one of them. The education of our children and young people and the education of ourselves (I will return to the education of ourselves later). However, this is only true if young people are not subjugated within the education or schooling system employed, as Apple et al. state, so it is to this ‘repositioning’ which we must now turn.

To be effective, any model of education that claims emancipation and justice as its goal has to be cooperative, collective or community minded and therefore must discourage forms of, particularly aggressive, competition. In order to achieve these forms of collectivism, cooperation and community, democratic models of schooling and education are indicated. As Jeffs and Smith (2005; 43) suggest, “a democratic system at least holds out the promise that people can collectively come together to reduce or perhaps even eliminate inequalities”. This is because in a democratic model of schooling, any discourse of inequality can become a discourse of justice (as

discussed earlier) because all the voices in the group can be heard through the democratic mechanisms employed. In turn, democratic education suggests a repositioning from the traditional 'teacher centred' forms of pedagogy to more dialectic ones. Dialectic education can come in several forms, most usually posited as 'problem-posing education' (see for example Bahruth & Steiner, 2000; Freire, 1985; Freire, 2008; Shor & Freire, 1987). Problem posing education allows young people to explore their subjective realities in an objective way and understand the conditions of their own lives and those of the wider world. This is achieved by, instead of being given information masquerading as 'knowledge', often called the banking method of education (Freire, 1993), young people are posed questions about the world and their place in it in order to explore relations of power and the normalisation of 'the way things are'. The traditional 'banking method' of education assumes that "students are identical empty vessels" (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000: 120), and that that is "not only erroneous, but punitive to students who have non-mainstream backgrounds". Freire puts it this way:

"Whereas the banking method directly or indirectly reinforces men's [sic] fatalistic perception of their situation, the problem posing method presents this very situation to them as a problem. As the situation becomes the object of their cognition, the naïve or magical perception which produced their fatalism gives way to perception which is able to perceive itself even as it perceives reality, and can be critically objective about that reality".

(Freire, 1993: 66)

Problem posing education sits neatly into an overarching democratic educational model as it allows for a mature positioning of the young people's views, needs and desires, which allows them to make critical decisions and moral judgements (Giroux, 2011) in a democratic forum. This will also enable young people to understand the relationship between knowledge and power;

“by asserting that knowledge is intrinsically interwoven with power, critical pedagogy adamantly and steadfastly dismisses the mainstream assumption of knowledge as objective and neutral” (Cho, 2013: 71). This means that once young people have accepted that knowledge is not objective and is therefore not only contextual and subjective in nature but that knowledge is a useful tool in personal and community empowerment and success, then young people should become more active and engaged learners. This is only the case if the system of schooling pro-actively engages this understanding of subjective knowledge and ensures that the connections between knowledge and power, and the deconstructions of the current, dominant use of ‘powerful knowledge’, are a central part of the education received. This is another example of where the process of substituting hope with expectations mentioned earlier, can be reversed, as with the understanding that there is a relationship between knowledge and power, coupled with the realisation that *any* knowledge, if used and posited correctly, can be powerful, including previously subjugated knowledge, young people can start to see the point in learning. This also could go a long way to counter-act the ‘not cool to be clever’ attitude held by so many young people, as intelligence becomes, for them a more effective form of resistance against the injustices they experience than rejection of learning. In other words, school becomes the ally in their emancipation rather than their oppressor. This is particularly achieved through a critical pedagogy within schools due to the tenet that critical pedagogy not only replaces ideology with discourse, allowing subjugated forms of knowing to have a space to flourish, but also because one of its central aims is to construct counter-hegemonic forms of knowing

and knowledges with the aim of changing power forms and patterns (Cho, 2013).

This change in the perception of knowledge and ways of knowing, will lead to an eventual change in society because as Jeffs and Smith (2005: 44) remind us, “democratic systems require an educational infrastructure. Their survival, in part, depends on the existence of an informed and committed electorate”. Therefore, if that educational structure is already democratic and practices a critical form of pedagogy, you will turn out young people who are indeed an informed and committed ‘electorate’ and have an intrinsic understanding of democratic mechanisms and the central importance of democracy for a cohesive and just society.

However, this does *not* mean that we should just change the school system and sit back with our fingers crossed. The change in society cannot come from education alone. We cannot sit back and say, ‘let it be the young people’s responsibility to clear up the mess that the generation before them left’. It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that these young people - educated in a more critical, more just system of education - are greeted by a world outside that celebrates them, instead of forcing them to fight to stay off the scrap heap of history. As McLaren (1995: 9) insists, what educators and indeed parents, need to realise is that “a New World Order cannot be realistically achieved without creating a new moral order at home first”, and that means in the classrooms *and the living rooms* of the nation. We cannot sit back and expect that schools will do the job of bringing up, in a holistic way, our children to be better adults and better stewards of a just social order than we have been. Teachers are human too and are just as much victims of

the current crisis of justice and identity as the rest of us and part of their conditioning comes from their teacher training. This is where parents, governors and the local community have an active role to play. Not to struggle with teachers, but to constantly strive for the education they want to see teachers deliver, which means resisting parts of the National Curriculum as an ideological strategy: “because schools are in part sites of ideological reproduction and production, they are contested because ideologies themselves are contested and continually struggled over”(Au & Apple, 2009: 87). It may be wise to choose a model of schooling, then, that is democratic, dialectic (or problem posing) and that is able to reject the National Curriculum, as many Free Schools are. Then what are you to teach in your new school? According to Blakemore and Firth (2005: 141) “Many years of research have shown that people are able to learn more information in the absence of information”. So one could teach anything and see that a valuable and large quantity of knowledge has been gained, although what Blakemore and Firth were actually alluding too was that the sourcing of information teaches a person more than being handed that information. This has echoes of Dewey’s (Dewey, 1965, 1997) laboratory schools in the United States. Dewey set up a school in which the children decided everything and were merely facilitated by their teachers. For example if they wanted to build a table, they were to understand through research the form and functions of tables. They would then go on to decide through discussion what was the most appropriate material and design, where to source the materials and what tools they would need to build the table. Then they would set up the workshop to build the tables of their designs. Every step of the process was a journey of discovery in which they learnt not only, how to measure, design

and build a table, but also about the social relations inherent in sourcing wood or metal, the sociology of tables; what form or function depended on your life-style and why you might want a table (For more information, see among others Žižek, 2008, 2013). Included in this process was maths, geometry, cooperation, communication skill and so on. The laboratory school has the absence of information, which Blakemore and Firth spoke of and that lack became the learning experience, closely, but without becoming authoritarian, facilitated by teachers. Even if this does not happen in schools, there are opportunities for the learning at school to be supplemented by this type of learning at home. However, this type of schooling should not be confused with critical pedagogy as that would be to subsume critical pedagogy into a liberal agenda of self-sufficiency and transferable skills. It must be remembered that “critical Pedagogy – and critical educational studies in general – broadly seeks to expose how relations of power and inequality, (social, cultural, economic) in their myriad forms combinations, and complexities, are manifest and are challenged in the formal and informal education of children and adults” (Apple, et al., 2009: 3) it “involves the fundamental transformations of the underlying epistemological and ideological assumptions that are made about what counts as ‘official’ or legitimate knowledge and who holds it.” So it is about more than learning through doing, it seeks interruption of the normative ways of thinking. “It is also grounded in radical shifts in one’s social commitments. This involves a commitment to social transformation and a break with the comforting illusions that the ways in which our societies and their educational apparatuses are currently organised can lead to social justice”(Apple, et al., 2009). This does not, of course, exclude the realm of experiential learning for

young people, as long as that is framed in a radical political project. This project may not be completely explicit in the classroom, especially for younger children, although it needs to become more and more so throughout the educational experience, but it must be key in the organising principles of any model of education if we are to elicit real, fundamental change.

The change in education must come from all quarters, be supported by anyone and everyone who has a vested interest in the future and as Holloway (2010: 56) assures us, “seizing the initiative means moving beyond confrontation: we determine our action according to our own needs. Let capital and the state run after us, let it try and co-opt or repress us”. The time is passed now to make demands for change from a state that is hell bent on cuts to education and other social enterprise. Holloway is correct in his statement that seizing the initiative, and seize it we must, will lead us beyond confrontation. We do not wish to confront those in power, we only wish to make that kind of coercive, at best, and repressive, at worst, power redundant.

Holloway (2010: 18-9) implores us to review real examples of where this has happened. He cites the story of a group of teachers in Puebla, Mexico:

“The government announced in 2008 the creation of a new scheme to improve the quality of education by imposing greater individualism, stronger competition between students, stricter measurement of the outputs of teachers, and so on, the teachers said, ‘no, we will not accept it.’ When the government refused to listen, the dissident teachers moved beyond their mere refusal and, in consultation with thousands of students and parents, elaborated their own proposal for improving the quality of education by promoting greater cooperation between students, more emphasis on critical thinking, preparation for cooperative work not directly subordinate to capital, and began to explore ways of implementing their scheme in opposition to state guidelines, by taking control of the schools. Here too the initial refusal begins to open towards something else, towards an educational activity that not only resists but breaks with the logic of capital”

Maybe we should take a lesson from the story of Puebla. There is a way to change and it starts with a refusal to accept the way things are. So, let the young people of today become the generation who really changes things, with our preparation, of course. Let them spend time in schools imagining a better world so that one day they may continue our project to create it. Let them understand their potential as beings-in-the-world. Let them be the project not the resource of human experience. This may sound like a utopian project, but maybe we need to reinvigorate the use of utopian thinking, as Cho (2013: 122) says, “utopian pedagogy is a broad idea to help us pursue alternative thinking and models, beyond what seems common and feasible”. This is what is needed to educate counter to the logic of capitalism, so that our young people are able to succeed in a world that wants and allows them to, whoever they are and whatever their starting points.

Teachers are in a strategic position to assume organic leadership as public intellectuals. Leonardo (2006: 95) supports this by saying that “they comprise a critical mass of intellectuals who function as social critics, as provocateurs of what Gramsci (1971: 59) called ‘passive revolution’”. But teachers alone cannot change the culture and educational paradigms of all young people, that has to come from all the walks of life that young people engage with. As McLaren stated earlier, the change has to also be in our ‘living rooms’. Which means that parents must educate themselves in the ways of critical education, develop what Freire (1993) calls their ‘epistemological curiosities’ and they too must learn to question everything, alongside their children and young people. They must learn, however, not only to question, but to

collectively find answers, to problematize those answers and then to seek solutions to those problems. The culture in the home relationships must match that of the relationships at school in order to prevent young people from living a contradiction. The school ethos of democratic, emancipatory, critical pedagogy must be supported and actively experienced outside, with those who insist every morning that their child must attend school. This idea is supported by Freire (1998: 58):

“to be in the world without making history, without being made by it, without creating culture, without a sensibility towards ones own presence in the world, without a dream, without a song, music, or painting, without caring for the earth or the water, without using one’s hands, without sculpting or philosophising, without any opinion about the world, without doing science or theology, without awe in the face of mystery, without learning, instruction, teaching, without ideas on education, without being political, is a total impossibility”

Young people have knowledge outside of what is packaged and handed to them in schools and this creates their personal and emotional biographies, the experiences that will stick with them their whole lives. Biographies that should be explored in schools to create other ways of knowing, bringing the context of the individual into the consideration of the collective.

As Allman (2010: 150) suggests, “critical education on its own is not capable of bringing about the transformation of a society; on the other hand, it is impossible to see how a society that is capable of guaranteeing a better future for humanity will ever come about without critical education”. The transformation of our society from the current one, characterised by oppression, racism, sexism, homophobia and intolerances of many kinds, into the kind of society we would all like to live in, which is yet to exist, and in that sense exists not-yet, through our utopian impulses, can be encouraged by critical education in our schools, colleges and universities. Alongside our

efforts in other realms of life. In this sense I agree with Allman (2010: 150), in that the approach to critical education that I advocate is “not only intended to prepare people to engage in social transformation, but it is also meant to serve as a prefigurative experience of the type of social relations that would lie at the heart of a transformed society”. In other words, what we see in our schools today, is what we will see reproduced in our society tomorrow; including inequalities and injustices, or, thinking, critical citizens collectively striving to create on a daily basis the kind of just society where everyone does, indeed, fit in.

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Making Hope Possible: An Exploration of Moving Popular Pedagogy Forward in Neoliberal Times from the Streets to the University.

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Abstract:

In this paper, taken from a fuller discussion in my Doctoral Thesis carried out under a bricolage methodology, I will argue, utilising the fictive and imaginative elements of bricolage, that there are possibilities to engender a popular education through several sites of learning; a social movement (Occupy London), a cooperative higher learning provider (The Social Science Centre) and a reorganised University (The University of Lincoln, Student as Producer). I will also discuss, through the use of generative themes, the possibilities of creating nurture and support networks between these sites by understanding their organisational potential and their pedagogical structures. I will attempt to imagine a cyclic trajectory of solidarity and support between them in order to engender a more popular education in all the sites that allows for emancipation from the enclosure of neoliberalised social relations and the fundamental transformation of sociality and social organisation. The paper concludes that there is potential for not only convivial relations between these three layers of pedagogical

interaction, but also the potential to create an action research-type cycle on a grand solidaristic scale.

Key words: Occupy, critical education, popular education, bricolage, universities, curriculum

Break. We want to break. We want to create a different world. Now. Nothing more common, nothing more obvious. Nothing more simple. Nothing more difficult.

(Holloway, 2010: 3)

What is important is not to draw dividing lines, but see the lines of continuity.

(Holloway, 2010: 25)

This paper is a result of my Doctoral thesis on the pedagogy in the London Occupy LSX camp (Occupy). The thesis examined Occupy to attempt to understand the nature and the potential of the pedagogy that occurred from the point of two particular pedagogical paradigms: The Universal Teaching ideas espoused by Rancière (1991) and the critical, democratic power sharing classroom detailed mainly by Shor (1996) but including the thinking of many other critical education scholars. The Doctoral thesis then went on, utilising a Bricolage methodology (Kincheloe, et al., 2011; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe & Tobin, 2006; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998), to explore the possibilities contained within two further sites of learning: The Social Science

Centre, a cooperative higher learning provider; and the University of Lincoln's Student as Producer project, a new organisational structure for the University in opposition to the student as consumer ethos, utilising research engaged practices. The argument contained in this paper, as in the thesis, is that a trajectory of popular, critical pedagogies, framed around the ideas of universal teaching (Ranci  re, 1991) and the democratic power-sharing pedagogy of critical educators (for example Freire, McLaren, Giroux, and particularly Shor, 1996) could be created, that may engender a popular education from the streets to the academy and back. This trajectory would enable the creation and use of 'learning loops' between the various levels of educational provision, from social movements to academe.

Therefore, this paper examines the arguments around this, and explores the learning from the three sites. I will examine them in themes to understand the implications to education, research and social relations. I will argue that there is the potential to build strong connections between the various forms of organisation and that those forms discussed here have varying potential for promoting voice, justice and democracy in the socio-political juncture surrounding the writing of this work. The paper will then continue on to argue that, at the current moment, there may well be a need for forms of organisation that have a critical pedagogical vanguard in order to begin a cultural transformation and escape from the enclosure of individuals into dominating and oppressive behaviours so that we might, one day, be able to dispense with these forms and create a more organic, non-hierarchical and fluidic form of education.

In order to do this, several generative themes have to be understood in specific and politicised ways. Running throughout each of the pedagogical projects are the contentious themes of occupation and reclamation (of space, of cities, of the intellectual subject, the heart and the mind); experience and conscientization (of the individual, the collective and the human as political animal). I argue that it is through these themes that the strongest lines of continuity can be seen. To do this, I will utilise the permitted fictive and imaginative elements of the bricolage (Kincheloe, et al., 2011; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe & Tobin, 2006; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998).

As Holloway (2010: 3) insists, “we protest and we do more. We do and we must. If we only protest, we allow the powerful to set the agenda”. This is the point. Holloway states that activism does not produce change, however important it may be. It is therefore necessary to connect the three sites together in order, not to assimilate or indoctrinate each other, but to create a dialogue to assist each other to grow, to become more, to reach into those forbidden places of utopian thinking and create the world of education that exists-not-yet (Holloway, 2010).

Cowden and Singh (2013: 3) describe what is happening in education as, “a crisis of thinking, feeling and doing” and insist, “it is crucial to understand the wider linkages”. Therefore, linking these attempts at restructuring, through a solidaristic cycle of praxis becomes paramount so that educators might be ready to ensure the ‘crisis of thinking, feeling and doing’ does not become pervasive throughout education and indeed society. I will now look at how the three sites presented in this work might do this through the themes of occupation, reclamation, story and experience and conscientization.

Occupation

Occupy: ... keep busy, engage, employ

Occupation: the state of having one's time or attention occupied

(Oxford English Dictionary, 2007: 1978)

Occupy: inhabit; ensconced in; populate; engage; engross; immerse

Occupied: engaged; active; absorbed; engrossed; involved

(Oxford Thesaurus of English, 2006: 604)

Brown (2012: 56) argues, “the target of occupation is no longer just physical spaces or objects, but everything, everywhere – including ourselves to begin with”. In addition, Neary and Amsler (2012: 109) remind us that there are now, following the Occupy movement, “rhizomatic occupations of everything, everywhere – public spaces, privatised spaces, schools, banks, libraries, government buildings, education, politics, even patriarchy”.

Of particular interest here is the movement to ‘occupy the curriculum’, and as Bigelow (2011) insists, “we don’t need to take tents and sleeping bags to our town squares to participate ... we can also “occupy” our classrooms, “occupy” the curriculum, and then collect the stories about what we have done”. Neary and Amsler (2012: 114) agree, “we are particularly interested in the possibility ... of appropriating the social space and time of education in

ways to enable us to articulate what, how and why people learn". This is the basis of occupation in this work: that people occupy the *space and time of the event* - even though the tents are now long gone from the Occupy LSX camp at St. Paul's, the *spaces and times* were created and people can occupy those relations, learn from them and create reflection and thought that will assist in future struggles. Otherwise, as Shantz (2013: 14) says, "the thrill of immediacy of the street eruptions quickly subsides, leaving little of real gain in its wake". Occupy may feel like this to many, but from a popular, critical pedagogical point of view, the energy that was spent there must be recouped and be learnt from. Holloway (2010: 30-1) explains it like this:

Often such explosions are seen as failures because they do not lead to permanent change, but this is wrong: they have a validity of their own, independent of the long-term consequences. Like a flash of lightening, they illuminate a different world, ... the impression that remains on our brain and in our senses is that of an image of the world we can (and did) create. The world that does not yet exist displays itself as a world that exists not-yet.

This world that exists not-yet in the case of Occupy is one of relations attended to otherwise, experimental democracy and, of particular interest here, open education (Neary & Winn, 2012), politically charged education in a place where the agora is reclaimed; reclaimed through filling the empty place of power (Lefort, 1988) with discussion, creativity and liberated desires to commune. However, these dissipating spaces and relations also need to be occupied and reflected upon. "The practices of occupation ... have thus far done so much to ignite the radical imagination, democratise teaching and learning in public, proliferate the production of new critical political theories and practices, popularise alternative models of radical democracy, and breathe new life into both politics and education" (Neary & Amsler, 2012: 117). These practices, thus far limited, need to be extended if the social

world is to escape from enclosure, because “two centuries of capitalism and market nihilism have brought us to the most extreme alienations – from ourselves, from others, from worlds” (The Invisible Committee, 2009: 16).

This world that exists not-yet, in opposition to the ‘extreme alienations’, could possibly become the new space of occupation. There is a notion that occupation freely moves into the ‘empty place of power’ (Lefort, 1988).

However, it is argued here, as elsewhere, that there are no empty places of power as they are prefilled with privatised and corporatized ideological property:

There can be no ‘empty’ spaces in social life, no ideologically vacant forms that await filling with radical content. ‘We are always in occupation’, write the Really Open University, ‘... Everything around us is also occupied at every single moment’. The practice of occupation is thus a process and praxis of learning (Really Open University, 2010 quoted in Neary & Amsler, 2012)

(Neary & Amsler, 2012: 114)

If this is so then, Merrifield (2011: 133) has a point when he asserts that

we need another zone of indistinguishability, another space of slippage, a space in which there’s a lot of spontaneous energy as well as a few signs indicating where to go and what time the action begins. We need a new space of slippage in which we can organise and strategize, act without self-consciously performing, encounter others without walls, and hatch en masse a daring Great Escape from capitalism.

Shor (Shor in Macrine, 2009: 121) argues that “participation in critical learning helps ...classrooms to function as vigorous public spheres, that is, as active public forums of broad deliberation..... Because discourse is a material force in the construction of self and society, such public spheres are

instruments for the democratic construction of self in society and society in self". However, The Invisible Committee (2009: 53) assert that "control has a wonderful way of integrating itself into the commodity landscape, showing its authoritarian face to anyone who wants to see it. It's an age of fusions, of muzak, telescoping police batons and cotton candy. Equal parts police surveillance and enchantment". We are under surveillance, but we need not be enchanted.

Therefore, it is argued that occupation can be viewed as a transgressive act, rather than an overt, physical act. The sites of learning discussed here transgress the normative rules in education and instead occupy the creative imaginations of those who wander/wonder in. However, as Foust (2010: 3) states, "transgressive actions incite reactions due to their relationship to norms: Transgressions violate unspoken or explicit rules that maintain a particular social order. Yet, as scholars and practitioners have figured it, transgression's threat to social order runs deeper than violating the rules and expectations that govern what is normal". The race is on to outrun those attempts: "If capital chooses to repress us, to co-opt us, to imitate us, so be it, but let it be clear that we lead the dance" (Holloway, 2010: 50).

Reclamation

Occupy literally occupied space, the space of Holloway's world that exists not-yet; the SSC claims to occupy a co-operative space, based on the free association of its members in order to occupy their own person's and relations with each other; the SaP initiative attempts to occupy the space of the consuming subject, rejecting it and nurturing it to realign to become

(co)producer of knowledge. Nevertheless, when individuals occupy, their task is then to reclaim.

“We have been expropriated from our own language by education, from our songs by reality TV contests, from our flesh by mass pornography, from our city by police and from our friends by wage-labour” insist The Invisible Committee (2009: 36). Moreover, Shantz (2013: 4) adds, “neoliberalism seeks an extension of commodification into all spheres of social and ecological life”. Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 2) add that the individual “political will to imagine much beyond the present seems hardly to exist. And the idea of utopia or the value of utopian thinking is easily dismissed as idle and silly. ...Nothing like an alternative to global capitalism seems remotely possible”. This is apparently not so in the sites discussed here where, for the most part, hope springs eternal. The reclamation of our humanity seems possible inside these places. In Occupy individuals attempted to begin the collective task of finding the solidarity required to find this will, to escape from their ordinary lives and to find others to work with; in the SSC the pedagogical project has the potential to create a greater awareness of how to dream, how to use utopian thought, to find an alternative; and in the SaP project, the potential is there to create an organisational structure that can support the theorising and the building of such alternatives.

Occupy reclaimed the right to public assembly and protest; the SSC reclaims the right to imagine in the terrain of the urban; and SaP reclaims the right to engage critically as co-producers of knowledge. All of these rights position the participants against an enclosure of public and civic life and the imagination. This is key. If the mass schooling of our creative imaginations is

to be challenged, then the assertion of the right to freely associate, to assemble, to imagine and to produce our own knowledge should be defended. Shantz (2013: 2) asserts, “there is a need now (as necessary as ever) to think through what we – non-elite, exploited, oppressed – want, and how we might get it. There is an urgency to pursue constructive approaches to meet common needs”. The three sites under discussion do this, to varying degrees according to their constrictions. But as Foust (2010: 3) insists “transgressions that are permitted or escape the notice and discipline of boundary-policing authorities, push the boundaries further ... In other words, transgression redefines lines of distinction, giving new meaning to identities and social practices”. Therefore, what is acceptable tomorrow will be *different* to what is acceptable today, in one way or another. In the case of SaP and the SSC, I would argue that if they were able to escape the ‘notice of the boundary policing authorities’ they could become accepted and normative practices, but only if they are celebrated for their reclamation of thought, imagination and a popular curriculum.

However, due to the full enclosure of ‘all spheres of social life’ and the notion that ‘the political will to imagine much beyond the present seems hardly to exist’, the first urgent reclamation can be argued to be that of *ourselves*. Reclaiming humanity, because, as discussed earlier, there is nothing external to ourselves that is not already full and enclosed. It is true that “the recognition of one’s ability to affect change, to produce another world is a crucial first step” as von Kotze (2012: 109) says, and that “creative collective experiences can help break through from seeing others as barriers rather than essential allies and make conscious the potential of solidarity in action”. This entails reclaiming sociality, a strong theme in the sites: reclaiming what

is common to all of us, our species experience as social beings, creating, in other words, commons. According to Dyer-Witheford (2010: 106), “the notion of the commons presupposes collectivities – associations and assemblies – within which sharing is organised”. Shantz (2013: 19) adds to this “in commonism we re-appropriate our own productive power, taking it back as our own”. Therefore, an educational philosophy that enhances the reclamation of sociality seems essential for initiating the process.

However, are hearts and minds currently free enough from the repression of the status quo to be occupied and reclaimed? What is perhaps needed is for individuals to rediscover themselves, collectively, as agentic beings, as the very notion of the necessity of occupation of ourselves suggests that the spaces within us, as we have previously heard, are full of toxic ideology and enclosures.

Story and Experience

Individuals in Occupy discussed at length each other’s stories and experiences in order to make sense of what was happening to them and the rest of their society; The members of the SSC use the ‘*Sociological Imagination*’ (Mills, 1957/2000) to make sense of their experience by inserting their own biographies into its framework of questions; and SaP uses the experience of the students’ knowledge production and their experience of ‘scenarios’ as the starting point for their research engaged teaching and learning programme.

Cavanagh (in Borg & Mayo, 2007: 45) suggests, “story telling is a tremendously powerful medium, pedagogy and much more”. Cho (2013: 78) adds “the voices of those who are marginalised can/do provide ‘evidence for

a world of alternative values and practices whose experience gives the lie to hegemonic constructions of social worlds' (Scott, 1992: 24)", making these stories from the margins important for escaping the enclosure of the TINA (there is no alternative) syndrome. Ollis (2012: 213) adds fuel to this notion by insisting that "adult learners are rich sites of knowledge... their capacity to take on new knowledge is dynamic because they are agentic", especially, it is argued here, when educational activity takes place in conducive and insurgent settings. Ollis says, about activists, that they "act with agency and purpose, demonstrating intentionality in their learning". I would argue that the stories from my fieldwork sites assert that the notion of activist needs redefining to encompass all learners who are beginning to 'occupy' their minds to exorcize those toxic ideologies and hegemonic lies spoken of earlier. As Cho (2013: 78) claims, "building pedagogy and knowledge on experience is regarded as one way to counter the claims of hegemonic truth".

There is an area of caution however, Cho (2013: 82) asserts that in the rush to celebrate voices and differences, experience has become essentialized – experience now speaks for itself. Experiences and voices are now treated as irreducible and the only legitimate basis for understanding. In a search for, and in honour of, genuine voices, the source of the voices becomes more important than the content of the voices. In other words, 'who speaks is what counts, not what is said' (Moore & Muller, 1999: 199).

Polletta (2006: 1-2) adds "on one hand, we celebrate storytelling ...for its authenticity, its passion, and its capacity to inspire not just empathy but action. Everyone has a story, we often say, and that makes for a discourse

with uniquely democratic possibilities” on the other hand “we worry that stories are easily manipulable.... after all, if everyone has her own story, then whose story should be privileged when it comes to making policy for everyone?”

However, Occupy and the SSC are not only telling their stories and using their experience pedagogically, they are also displaying their intellectual prowess in public. SaP also attempts this through a great deal of public engagement, but is confined by its space within the university as an institution. However, it is this element of public performance of other social relations that makes the pedagogy activism in and of itself:

I have argued the practices of ... activists are not only social but embedded in the everyday interactions of practice, whereby learning is inherently connected to the emotions and driven by passion, a desire to change the world, and a need to promote social justice. It is difficult to comprehend that an epistemology of learning such as this is so often neglected by educators as a legitimate form of knowing, particularly when the practices of activists are so educationally rich

(Ollis, 2012: 225)

It is this idea that connects SaP, and its desire to engage its students in real world scenarios and problems for research, to the other sites, this epistemology of learning is not ignored by them.

The role of experience and storytelling is of particular significance in HE, as academe can have a tendency to become wrapped up in its own ‘ivory tower’ pomposity and therefore connections with activist groups and ordinary people can ground what happens within its walls. For example, in a study of academics practicing popular education carried out by Johnston (2005: 71) one of the respondents

specifically stressed her involvement with a young anarchist group as a 'wake-up call', a challenge to our assumptions as educators, demonstrating a 'need to reinvigorate ourselves from time to time staying in touch with new ideas'.

Ollis (2012: 224) takes this notion a step further after her study of activist learning : "in an environment of lifelong learning in education, which focusses on core graduate attributes in students, like the development of communication skills and problem-solving and critical thinking skills, there is much to learn from .. activists' important pedagogy". Critical and popular pedagogy/education has seen the advantage and understood the gains of shared experience and storytelling and here I would argue there is evidence that the university can benefit from involving itself with activists who engage in the sharing of experience.

Conscientization

As Kane (2005: 34) argues, "the understanding of what constitutes critical consciousness, a basic concept in popular education, is something which can vary dramatically in accord with more generalised political-ideological beliefs" and therefore the notion should be approached with caution.

Nevertheless, a condition I utilise for examining critical consciousness is the lack, or absence, of what Steinklammer (2012: 26) describes as "the dominant world view seems like the natural order, and is taken for granted".

This attitude is made possible because "the success of neoliberal politics was partially due to their ability to capture the public's imagination" (Milojevic, 2006: 28-9). Therefore, it is possible to assert that a state of critical consciousness is an absence of this way of thinking, an escape from the enclosure of this 'natural order', from the prescriptive, capture of the imagination.

As Rancière (1991: 23) insists, “the student must see everything for himself [sic], compare and compare, and always respond to a three part question: what do you see? What do you think about it? What do you make of it?” Although Rancière is not advocating familiar forms of critical pedagogy or popular education, his statement is familiar from a popular critical education perspective and seems to be true of our pedagogical sites. Neary and Amsler (2012: 132) add this: “the essential aspect of critical practical reflexivity is that it questions the validity of its own concepts, which it does by recognising itself as inhering in the practical social world emerging out of, and inseparable from, the society it is attempting to understand”. This type of reflexivity should be emergent from authenticity of the human experience, Freire (1998: 31-2) understood that “when we live our lives with the authenticity demanded by the practice of teaching that is also learning, we are participating in a total experience that is simultaneously directive, political, ideological, gnostic, pedagogical, aesthetic and ethical. In this experience the beautiful, the decent and the serious form a circle with hands joined”. I argue that, it is this joining of hands, this collective experience of questioning the validity of our own concepts, that brings us into a state of conscientization. The prefigurative, and therefore intensely pedagogical, nature of Occupy makes this questioning inevitable. The SSC and SaP have this questioning built into their curriculums as a necessary dialogue between all parties. “Popular educators/activists in social movements would say radical interventions happen through the concerted, purposive building of critical consciousness, through analysing power relations, through fashioning a constantly vigilant attitude” (von Kotze, 2012: 104), this is contained within the rhetoric from both the SSC and SaP. In addition, Freedman (2011: 10)

argues that “we will also need a clear vision of what the university should be: a public service, a social entitlement, a space for critical thinking and a place of discovery”, The University of Lincoln seems to have this vision, through the SaP project, and are attempting to implement it as both a practical project and an idea. Neary and Amsler (2012: 113) report that Occupy “asserted that because it was primarily an idea or collectivised sense of agency, it could never be ‘evicted’ from social relations”, and so once the idea of conscientization is planted and exercised, it becomes part of the emergent and flourishing social relations.

Fitting the case studies together: finding the trajectory

Ollis (2012: 8) argues that “all activism, in fact all politicisation, is an invitation to learning. To be politicised is to learn”. Here I would turn that argument on its head and assert that all learning is (should be) politicisation, in fact, all learning is (should be) activism. It is from this premise that I will attempt to construct an interruptive cycle from the sites.

Newman (2005: 22) insists “to practice popular education ... we need to form an understanding of action, identify the kinds of action open to us, and consider the implications of engaging in each kind”. However, not every kind of action is open to everyone for various personal and social reasons and, I assert, it need not ever be. Everyone taking to the streets and setting up camp, under the threat of violent repression from the authorities, may sound to some like the best option to elicit change; however, I would argue it is not a realistic one. All one can do from the streets *on mass* is to either refuse or demand. The Occupy camp, had it involved all the individuals who sympathised, supported and showed solidarity out on the streets, would not

have been able to prefigure a new society even to the extent they did. There is a danger that these collective actions become too big to succeed as they overreach their capacity and too many voices shout at once. Holloway (2010) makes a valid point in his assertion that cracks in capitalism need not be homogenous and indeed should not become that way. The lines of continuity and the solidaristic activities between them are what counts.

Each of the learning sites is considered here a form of activism, a form of reflection, a form of prefiguration and a form of knowledge (co)production. However, the questions needing answers are as follows: who has the time, space and inclination to apply the learning from the knowledge generated? Who is in a position to take up any new theory that has been produced from these activities and turn it into a sustainable project of experimentation and implementation? In addition, who can set up new ways of doing interruptive activism based on the activities of the rest? The answers to these questions are for each individual to decide and reflect upon at different times in their own lives, fluidity is key. However, there are some constants: academic researchers are in a position to record, reflect upon and theorise what is happening; organisations such as the SSC are positioned perfectly to take the learning and implement it in ever increasingly sustainable ways; those we currently identify as social movements are in a position to take the theories and apply them as new forms of interruptive activism.

I argue that the task for educational researchers and teachers then, as Holloway (2010: 12) insists, is to “learn a new language of struggle, and by learning, to participate in its formation”. The argument follows that we must find each other, dialogue and create, thus creating networks of solidarity,

feedback loops of the learning that we all so desperately need to enclose the enclosers, to escape from the fatalism of the neoliberal agenda.

This looking for (and creation of) cracks is a practical-theoretical activity, a throwing ourselves against the walls but also standing back to try to see the cracks and faults in the surface. The two activities are complementary: theory makes little sense unless it is understood as part of the desperate effort to find a way out, to create cracks that defy the apparently unstoppable advance of capital, of the walls that are pushing us to our destruction

(Holloway, 2010: 8)

Ollis (2012: 9) says of theory that it can “help you find your voice; it can help you to understand inequality and hegemony. Theory can also provide insight into what needs to be challenged and changed”. The Occupiers (Interview data) said that when the Occupy camp started they ‘hit the ground running’ and had no time for reflection and theorising, they just had to act; The SSC have applied theories to the unpacking and analysis of their own biographies; and SaP hopes to produce both theoretical and lived knowledge via the inquiries of its students and academics. Therefore, if the attention of the SaP initiative, wherever possible, were to be directed at scenario’s where there was a goal of social change, for example, Occupy, then new knowledges, theories and even epistemologies could be (co)produced. This production could become fully co-production, without the need for bracketing any contribution. The co-production would include not only the students and academics in the university, but also the activists carrying out the projects. This is not a new idea, I know, however, these new theories, these tales, ideas and philosophies could then be fed through an organisation such as the SSC: open, democratic and inclusive, where anyone could openly study them in order to exploit their explanations of the world to the ends of improving actions for transformation. If the SSC model spread to more sites:

who carefully challenged ideologies not compatible with social justice, then used, as teaching points, culturally hegemonic sticking points and behaviours, discussed as a central tenet the dynamics of its members in a non-threatening way, then activists and academics alike may find these spaces places to reflect upon the theories produced by academics about the actions of the activists. This is how a 'grand' cycle of action research-type activities could conceivably come about, producing in its wake a wave of countervailing discourses where a Multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2004) of democratic voices could be heard.

This combats Milojevic's (2006: 30) assertion that "unless there is a dialogue between the various utopian, dystopian and other futures imaging, dominant social groups and ideologies will continue to define what is seen as utopian (implying impossible and naïve) and what is seen as 'the truth about the future'. This is problematic because it facilitates the colonisation of the future by particular visions and images". However, if the status and relations between activists and academics were to change to become equals in the same struggle, understanding what the limitations are for each other, the dialogue that Milojevic suggests is essential could actually take place, rather than the insider/outsider dichotomy presented in some activist/academic circles. In addition, Kane (2005: 41) suggests further benefit from this alliance:

I believe that popular education movements [and I would argue social movements generally] everywhere should consider more explicitly the role of ideology in their work. This is a task in which the engagement of the academy should have something distinctive to offer. But academics also need to do this for themselves: whether writing papers, teaching students or setting up international networks, the more explicitly we can address questions of ideology, the less

confusion will surround the multiplicity of practices purporting to be popular education [and indeed social movements]

It seems there is a need for linking struggles together. This is where the need to reassess the nature and practice of research plays a role. Roggero (2011: 5) says that “co-research questions the borders between research and politics, knowledge and conflicts, university and social context, work and militancy” and it is these borders that, I would argue, not only need to be questioned, but to be redefined if learning loops and feedback systems are to be produced. Shantz’s (2013: 1) words strengthen this notion when he insists, “in the period of crisis and opportunity, movements of the global North have been largely perplexed by questions of how to advance, to build strength on a sustainable basis in a way that might pose real challenges to states and capital”. Shantz also hints here at the idea of the inclusion of other epistemologies, other modes of struggle, other imaginaries of change being brought into the consciousness of the movements of the global North, building a “new language of an emerging constellation of struggle” (Holloway, 2010: 12). Again, to reiterate Kane’s point, this is where universities have something distinctive to offer; not only the co-production of knowledge, but the exchange of global knowledges and ways of thinking, acting and being. As Mezzadra and Roggero (2010: 33) assert, what becomes key in the present period is “the capacity of the movements themselves to create their own institutions that ... assert themselves within a common space”.

So what does it all mean?

Changing the world feels like hard work. It feels like no ground is being gained. It feels like countervailing discourses are marginalised and ignored. It feels like there is a need to think really carefully about what is being done and ensure that it is *something*, something that allows us to learn. As Newman (2005: 22) says, “in popular education we learn in order to act, and act in order to learn”, this, then, seems like what should be being done. I argue that it is these *processes* that ought to be captured in the newly liberated commons, the commons of our reclaimed, occupied selves, of the reclaimed and occupied spaces of sociality and utopian thinking and of the occupied pedagogies. If these processes are not captured as belonging to us, collectively and freely, they may be lost, to mechanisms of co-option and enclosure.

Therefore, it is the argument of this work that thought should be given to what creating critical, popular education links between social movements, community groups and universities means. If there were strong ‘learning loops’, feedback systems that cycle learning from one group to the next, the impossibility of change starts to crack, the more learning is shared, the stronger solidarity becomes. As a result, the less impossible the task of changing the world becomes, because all turning back seems even more impossible then to stay where we were.

The way we Educate

In our view, the time is ripe for some dissonance and dissent – and for dissident voices to be heard.

(Crowther et al., 2005: 1)

It seems to me that skilled pedagogues are needed to initiate the required change, well versed in popular education and who understand the nuances of oppressive behaviour. This allows these behaviours, the classroom banter containing sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of oppressive and colonial attitudes, to be picked up immediately and be treated as teaching points. As Bahruth and Steiner (2000: 129) say of their experience:

if we do not postpone the syllabus and utilize the organic teachable moments ...we merely 'cover' the curriculum. The curriculum becomes the antagonist of non-engagement while contributing to the development of false concepts about teaching and learning.....critical pedagogues are aware of the 'hidden' curriculum and are politically motivated to be counter-hegemonic.

This awareness of the hidden curriculum comes with experience and the practice of a critical gaze. Bahruth and Steiner (p. 122-123) insist that “teachers must recognise both conscious and unconscious attempts to derail the discourse”, can these attempts be recognised if the teacher does not have a good understanding of the subject the learners are grappling with?

Pedagogues need to be experienced enough to organise the learning, in order that the learning remains a collective and wholly collaborative experience. This was one of the reasons cited for Tent City University in Occupy London having been lost, there was no one experienced enough to take on the job of organising a suitable programme once the free space of the Tent City encampment had gone.

Castells (2012) warns, the pedagogical process has to contain interactive communication to focus people's frustration into collective action. This focussing of frustration and other emotions can only happen in an

educational context if the pedagogue is occupying the educative moment and the pedagogical process. Otherwise as Freire (1998: 74) says,

One of the basic questions that we need to look at is how to convert merely rebellious attitudes into revolutionary ones in the process of the radical transformation of society.....it is necessary to go beyond rebellious attitudes to a more critical and revolutionary position, which is in fact a position not simply of denouncing injustice but announcing a new utopia. Transformation of the world implies a dialectic between two actions: denouncing the process of de-humanization and announcing the dream of a new society

Ranci re's (1991) *Ignorant Schoolmaster*, therefore, is only an adequate philosophy in some specific ways: everyone can teach, anyone can learn, as Tent City University puts it, nevertheless, I would argue that to ensure that knowledges are not lost, subjugated or simply missed, an expert is needed to ensure that any dialogue encompasses 'Other' views and epistemologies.

Freire (1998: 38) asserts that "human curiosity, as a phenomenon present to all vital experience, is in a permanent process of social and historical construction and re-construction", which could support either argument.

However, Freire adds this: "It is precisely because ingenuous curiosity does not automatically become critical that one of the tasks of progressive educational praxis is the promotion of a curiosity that is critical, bold and adventurous". The argument I want to make here is that without understanding the material that the students or learners are grappling with, the pedagogue may not be able to effectively assist in the development of a critical understanding. Occupy illustrated this by inviting in 'experts' to assist with their ongoing inquiry into the state of things and what to do about it. In

addition, Brookfield (2001) argues that people do not spontaneously become critical thinkers, and that even when they do, prompted by some changing life experience, it is a painful process and that this needs to be nurtured by skilled helpers. This process maybe made easier by a skilled pedagogue asking the questions alongside the learner of a corpus of information that the pedagogue knows well and can therefore anticipate the pitfalls, the cul-de-sacs and the potential triumphs.

However, what is indicated by my larger study is that this process of developing critical thinking has to start with a belief in the equality of intelligence in order to ensure that the learner is able to become agentic in the process. I argue that “critical pedagogy changes the relationship between teachers and students. It changes teachers from givers/authority figures to ‘co-learners’ with students” (Cho, 2013: 88), the SaP project, along with the SSC are examples of this, but this seems, from the studied sites to be especially true when power sharing within the classroom is enacted with an emphasis on research engaged teaching and learning. The Ignorant Schoolmaster, however, cannot share power, but must hand it over to his/her students. This handing over of power could lead to despots emerging in the learning process, manipulating the learners, as was uncovered in some cases in Occupy. There, the safe space required was never created, because there was a bias toward certain groups of people, disavowing others from adding to dialogue (interview data). An expert pedagogue might have picked this up and challenged it. The Occupy General Assemblies (GAs) were intensely educative and concretised the norms and hegemonies of the movement. However, the deconstruction of the GAs may have been thought necessary by an attending pedagogue whose expertise lies in

gender theory, or democratic participation, who would have noticed oppressive or repressive behaviour, had they been mandated to carry out this task.

In this respect, the role of the popular education teacher as merely facilitator needs to be examined and training for adult educators, including university staff, should perhaps include a more critical, dynamic and ongoing assessment of learning relationships. This might include conversations similar to those reportedly had by the SSC (interview data), where preconceptions and prejudices regarding gender, race and sexuality, etc. are unpacked and challenged from a theoretical perspective allowing individuals to confront their own behaviours from an objective stance: critical pedagogy par excellence. The University of Lincoln seems to attempt this with its ongoing engagement between its staff and the goals of the SaP project (University of Lincoln, 2012). This thinking and insight could then filter down into the classroom or pedagogical space and be practiced not merely as staff training, but also as a central tenet of the organisations pedagogy. This may sound like old news, however, it is worth re-stating because as Shor (1996: 2) explains, “a common weakness of intellectuals who receive more education than is healthy for human beings is our trouble recognising the obvious and doing the sensible”.

On analysis of my Thesis data it is suggested that there has to be someone in the learning process to guide the newer learners to credible sources in their field, to suggest paths of learning as is happening in the SSC. The SaP initiative, although separating the knowledges gained by the students into disciplinary fields and subjects, does allow for cross fertilisation and an

opening up of those fields through interdisciplinary working in a research engaged atmosphere. This could well lead to a post-disciplinary epoch for many subjects and therefore a whole systems view of the world and its relations, connection and, of course, lines of continuity. The same applies to social movements:

In social conflicts, such informal learning processes are much more likely to take place. However, there is a danger that these learning experiences remain covert and unconscious and, without conscious educational processes in which those resistant and empowering experiences of practice can be taken up and used as a point of departure, they cannot fulfil their full empowering potential. Thus, a task for critical education is to provide the space to bring those informal learning processes to consciousness, to reflect on them and to develop further strategies for action in exchange with others

(Steinklammer, 2012: 33)

Bringing out informal learning processes to consciousness, reflecting upon them and developing further strategies for action in exchange with others is something that can be done jointly by researchers and pedagogues (who, of course, can be one in the same). This is also why, I argue, it is important to have some researchers/pedagogues who are relatively external to the processes going on in the social movement; because they need a critical distance to ensure that they can observe the crucial moments when these informal learning processes take place but avoiding the colonial gaze of the traditional researcher, that according to Burdick and Sandlin (2010) could actually lessen the efficacy of the collective struggle and lead it to become just another institutionalised discourse. In addition, this is why it is important, as Neary explained (interview data, 2013), for knowledge to *become the movement*, because the fact that individuals are *learning to resist* the enclosure of capitalist relations has to be explicit to maintain the resistance. Individuals have to be able to reflect critically on what they have done, what

they have achieved, otherwise they could become despondent, a phenomenon that I, and I am sure, many, activists recognise.

Newman (2005: 29-30) insists, “we can teach about different forms of social action. We can provide an analysis of the different social sites where popular education might be located. We can teach the different domains of learning. We can teach different kinds of social control”. Resulting not in learners “waiting for the professor to do education to them” (Shor, 1996: 10), but in politically literate, critically engaged independent learners for whom education has a different meaning than the schooled consuming of official knowledge organised into a degree with transferable skills in order to score that illusive graduate job. Education could take on a different meaning: “education manages to provide people with greater clarity in ‘reading the world’, and that clarity opens up the possibilities for political intervention. Such clarity is what will pose a challenge to neoliberal fatalism” (Freire, 2007: 4).

To these ends, the democratic power-sharing that is displayed in the SSC, and to some extent in Occupy, seems the most productive organisation of learning for popular education, both outside and within the academy.

Democratic power-sharing, even to the extent seen in Occupy where the ‘expert’ may never say what he or she wanted to say, but is probed on issues relating to their expertise, seems the most inclusive and political way to conduct pedagogy.

From their own study of a popular education project, von Kotze (2012: 108) explains that their participants,

having internalized how conditions of competition for scarce resources translate into competitive behaviour rather than sharing it took a while to recognise just how deep the 'cut-throat' mentality had permeated all aspects of their lives to the degree that it had become naturalised as normal. Reimagining relations as cooperative and reciprocal was a major step – and one that had to be made over and over in different sessions

This experience illustrates the necessity for gently handing over power to the students if the goal is mass conscientization and not marginalisation of efforts toward change: sharing power, nurturing resistance, taking up incongruent and solipsistic behaviours as teaching points. For some students, even those with much schooling, 'education' is quite a new experience and to think of education as a political act, even more so.

The way we research

My argument here is that we cannot decouple education or activism from research. However, as Burdick and Sandlin (2010: 3) suggest, "the limited discursive space posed by an already known construct of how education *looks* and *feels* offers a problematic space to/for researchers interested in the curricula and pedagogies that exist beyond and between institutional boundaries".

When researching activist groups from an educational perspective, there can be many interesting and possibly underexplored activities that for the researcher constitute 'pedagogy', but for the social movement's participants, have not been thought about that way. Therefore, tensions arise, as critique of activities can seem like misunderstanding or misrepresentation if the relationship is not handled sensitively. Holst (2002: 81) sees the shortcomings of analysing social movements as pedagogical from the opposite view point:

it is recognised in the literature that there has been a general tendency to dismiss the importance and nature of learning in social movements. This reluctance stems from (a) viewing social movement practice as political and not educative; (b) the tendency in adult education to dismiss informal education in everyday life, and (c) the increasing professionalization of the field away from its historical roots in social movements themselves.

Perhaps, then, if we organise education systems to allow people to relish tensions in their social relations, recognise the informal education in everyday life and begin to see the political as pedagogical and the pedagogical as political, research interventions will become a recognised and valued part of our growth and evolution as a human species.

This entails individuals and groups accepting critique, without that becoming the criticism of competition, but rather the critique of camaraderie. This achieved, people will then be able to build in the cycles of action research in all parts of the social world as the tensions, the critiques and the research interventions will be just another element of the positive social relations being built.

Burdick and Sandlin (2010: 7) insist “researchers must be willing to place themselves into the difficult role of the witness – the uncertain, decentred participant in the pedagogical moment – rather than that of detached educational critic”, this position implies the “improvisational enactment of the bricolage” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 5). The position of witness works in several ways, firstly, the critical friend, picking up upon and unpacking the hegemonic attitudes that individuals are unaware they are reproducing in the heat of tense action and, secondly, recording the triumphs and the changes being produced. As Castells (2012: 142) asks, “if people think otherwise, if they share their indignation and harbour hope for change, society will ultimately change according to their wishes. But how do we know such a

cultural change is happening?” This is where social movements require a critical secretary (Denzin, 2010). However, consideration that this role definition is subject to change, redefinition and addition is required, for as Denzin (2010: 15) insists, “the open ended nature of the qualitative research project leads to a perpetual resistance against attempts to impose a single, umbrella like paradigm over the entire project”. The researcher should, as bricolage methodology suggests, be methodological negotiator, using the imaginative elements of the research process to understand where s/he should be and what s/he should be attentive to at any given time.

The sites in this study have given us what Burdick and Sandlin (2010: 3) call “glimpses of the pedagogical Other – forms and practices of pedagogy that exist independently of, even in opposition to, the knowledge within the common sense ‘research imagination’ (Kenway & Fahey, 2009) found in the general body of scholarly discourse on education”. Burdick and Sandlin argue that without a careful and imaginative approach to researching these sites of learning outside formal institutions, “researchers risk taking on an institutionalised form of the colonial gaze, applying reductive logics to or even completely failing to witness phenomena that are not easily resolved in dominant cultural meanings and images of teaching and learning” (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010: 3). Researchers need, therefore, to understand that, “these moments embody not just practices to adapt and creatively redeploy, but are in themselves ways of understanding the world and forms of research in action” (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007: 37). I would argue that researchers of these types of public and popular pedagogy are there to help make this ‘understanding the world’ and forms of research explicit and effective.

Nonetheless, “defining and capturing critical public pedagogies through the

lens of traditional educational research has the potential to arrest the potency of such activism” (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010: 8) and therefore using bricolage to “expand research methods and construct a more rigorous mode of knowledge about education” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004: 1) does seem appropriate.

Cho (2013: 74) insists that these critical pedagogies have “replaced ideology with discourse” and this could now be the job of research. Holloway (2010: 258) asserts that we are all “ordinary people: if we think of ourselves as special, distinct from the masses who are happily integrated into the capitalist system, we immediately exclude the possibility of radical change”. When researchers see themselves as ordinary people, and not those who have special insight, but rather those with specialist knowledge, they can open up their research as discourse rather than ‘truth’ or ‘fact’. In this way, it becomes easier to initiate knowledge exchanges with popular education projects and social movements outside the academy. I argue however, that this is only possible if researchers are ordinary people whose specialised knowledge work is part of a dialogue, not a final statement.

“Universities are, at one and the same time, privileged and contradictory places in which academics, whatever the pressure constraints they encounter, still enjoy a high degree of relative autonomy” (Crowther *et al.*, 2005: 1) and it is this degree of autonomy that provides the opportunity to occupy. Creating a space of slippage, not only in classrooms and teaching activities, but also in research and knowledge work in order to disquiet the flows of dissemination with controversy and politicised, living knowledge.

As Burdick and Sandlin (2010: 6) say, researchers should seek to develop ways of exploring these movements as public pedagogies “for the ways they are unknowable, and practice – as well as bring attention to – the silences they reveal in our understandings of curriculum and pedagogy”. These are the spaces research could occupy, these sites of slippage, these zones of indistinguishability (Merrifield, 2011). These unknowable pedagogies and their silences, the uncomfortable, interruptional and potentially insurrectional spaces that politicised, living knowledge can nurture, and thus allow a reconnection beyond enclosure and begin a journey into new utopias and thought experiments, in turn practiced by those with the energy that justified anger constructs.

In other words:

we argue that educational researchers must see their work as an answer, a response to the pedagogical utterances of the critical pedagogue or pedagogy: *the Other to our understanding of pedagogy, learning and education in the broadest sense....taking up the ethical call to answer, then, implores researchers to look beyond the unerring quest for certainty in much academic research and instead to conduct academic inquiry that voices itself as decentred, humble, and even celebratory of the pedagogies that exist beyond our institutional knowing.*

(Burdick & Sandlin, 2010: 8, my italics)

The future of the academy, the community and change agents

What intellectual and political tactics might be appropriate for conceptualising an occupation of curriculum? What are the spaces and times of curriculum that we might inhabit otherwise? And what external macro- and micro-politics must this project be connected to in order for it to have any transformative potential beyond individual perception?

(Neary & Amsler, 2012: 116)

The above questions posed by Neary and Amsler have been central to this work. Kane (2005: 40) has this to say:

In my experience, the rhetoric of ‘academic freedom’ still allows us, mostly, to be honest about what we think...Our role is to use our relative autonomy to develop critical consciousness amongst our students, both through posing questions – and making explicit their ideological underpinnings – and, more generally, by exposing students to a range of ideas and literature which is often ignored or not seen as relevant to the dominant instrumentalism.

It could be argued that there is the potential for this in the SaP initiative at The University of Lincoln (UL), through the model of research-engaged teaching and learning. Could this model spread? The SaP model is a start and Neary and others from UL are, on a weekly basis, speaking at conferences, facilitating workshops, writing scholarly articles and carrying out other public engagement activities to promote it²⁶, so there is evidence of interest and therefore the possibility of further engagement in this type of HE organisation.

Crowther and Villegas (2012: 58) insist that “the [current political] trend all looks very favourable for the educator committed to a democratic project for social justice and equality. The aims of this type of educational engagement is to build a social and political order that is willing to subordinate economic activity to democratic mandates, a goal which many progressive social movements also aim to achieve”. Steinklammer (2012: 30) concurs and adds, “it is necessary to connect the claims that education should have an empowering effect with the perspective of resistance”. The SSC attempt to do this already and Occupy began to connect the empowering effect of

²⁶ For example see: <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/events/> and <https://twitter.com/mikeneary>

resistance with education. SaP attempts to do this through its organising principle, but is yet to see the awareness of that filter down to the consciousness of its students explicitly. It therefore looks as though Crowther and Villegas are correct in their assertion and that this is borne out by the inquiries here.

It is worth noting here as Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 3) do, “that every great educational theory is imbued with elements of what might be called the utopian disposition”. It is worth using Peters and Freeman-Moir’s description of utopia to illustrate the interpretation of utopian thinking subscribed to here:

Utopianism is not about specific solutions but rather the opening of the imagination to speculation and open exploration. ‘and in such adventure two things happen: our habitual values (the ‘common sense’ of the bourgeois society) are thrown into disarray. And we enter into Utopias proper and newfound space: the education of desire. to open a way of aspiration, to ‘teach desire to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire in a different way’.....Utopianism, when it succeeds, liberates desire to an uninterrupted interrogation of our values and also to its own self-interrogation’ (E. P. Thompson quoted in Peters & Freeman-Moir, 2006: 4). In this education of desire the status quo is opened up to question but the challenge is not restricted to the short comings of the present. The utopian thinker is also free to think of ways of living that lie completely beyond what is currently envisaged.

(Peters & Freeman-Moir, 2006: 4)

A friend of mine, a Professor in a fiercely politically contested area of research, was accused once of being too controversial. Controversy, he said, is the job of the university (personal communication). What he meant was that if the university does not tolerate controversy, then ideas will never move on: utopian thinking is controversial; it moves outside the box, it sits on top of the box and ponders for a while, it lifts the corners of the box and peers in often using the ideas contained there to create new ones. It makes the box uncomfortable and the box squirms and shifts uneasily when utopian thought

is around. I would argue that the free thought that assists escape from enclosure must be utopian in order to imagine a way out.

As society moves to a more popular ethos for its education, pedagogues must “ensure that critique and the creative imagination fertilize one another, that values and new ideas are activated and become visible in the work of the imagination towards creating a new homeland” (von Kotze, 2012: 111). This is potentially already happening in the researched sites and elsewhere. It is worth mentioning here the recent rise in the number of ‘free universities’ (for examples see <http://sustainingalternatives.wordpress.com/>), where volunteer academics teach courses for which there is no fee. Also, public pedagogy initiatives such as ‘The University for Strategic Optimism’ (<http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/>)

a group of mainly post-graduate students who do teach-outs in banks, on the streets, and in other sites of political dissatisfaction.

However, there is no need to give up free time, or teach-out in banks to be part of the struggle (although our efforts are redoubled if we do), there is the possibility to do as Newman (2005: 26) insists,

Just as corporate trainers seek to turn working organisations into learning organisations, and lifelong educators try to turn suburbs, towns and cities into learning communities, popular educators can help to turn social movements into learning movements.

Scholars can do this both within against and beyond the university, eventually realising the dream of dissolving the walls of the university and turning whole cities into explicitly pedagogical sites. However, until this

dream is a reality, Shantz (2013: 72) thinks, “there is a pressing need ... for institutions, organisations, and relations that can sustain people as well as building capacities for self-defence and struggle”. He calls these institutions and organisations “infrastructures of resistance”.

Denzin (2010: 20), building on the work of others, says, “we need to become more accomplished in linking these interventions to those institutional sites where troubles are turned into public issues, and public issues transformed into social policy (Nespor, 2006: 124; Mills 1959; Charmaz, 2005)”. Real opposition to what is happening requires more than momentary joy (Holloway, 2010; Shantz, 2013), “it requires foundations and infrastructures that contribute to significant advances while maintaining a basis for ongoing struggles” (Shantz, 2013: 15). The SSC and SaP, extended and reproduced could constitute those foundations and infrastructures.

This, then, is the *utopian* future for educational institutions, one where alliances can be made in order to dissolve the essentialised dichotomy of teacher and learner. Of course, there are plenty of people who have said this before, however as Kincheloe and Tobin (2006: 4) say, “while we deeply respect those who have come before us and have helped us to get where we are, we are ambitious – we want to go farther into the epistemological and ontological fog”. The time seems to be right, society seems to be in a socio-political juncture that lends itself to the possibility of radical change, capitalisms crises have reached the point of destabilisation, there are uprisings all over the world and people are edgy (Thesis interview data; Holloway, 2010; Neary & Amsler, 2012; Merrifield, 2011; The Invisible Committee, 2009). As the neoliberal agenda of policy makers tightens its grip

on institutions, they must transgress that grip and intervene as teachers and researchers in any way they can, as Holloway (2010: 256) says, “there is no right answer, just millions of experiments”.

The move to a more popular based pedagogy in these institutions is an effective way to transgress. I have discussed that individual’s thoughts, minds and hearts are places that are essential to occupy as they are enclosed in a way that is easily transgressed and escaped if people join their efforts: “the more we join with others, the greater our creative power” (Holloway, 2010: 248). “Popular education is concerned with learning to identify, use and resist various kinds of social control” (Newman, 2005: 28), this justifies it becoming the transgressive norm in university institutions. Popular education is also concerned with pedagogy that comes from the interests and needs of the ‘people’, the students, the community members, the populace, the Multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2004). It is therefore very effective at raising the volume of the silenced and subjugated voices. This challenge to the hegemonic regime of truth, constitutes in those members of the group who have not been subjugated a form of awareness raising:

Education is not a habitus, but a force that objects to every kind of habitualisation of habits that chain the human being to what already exists..... on the other hand, this cannot be done in isolation from practice, since the practical sense is structured by practice and at the same time has a structuring effect. Therefore, practical experiences and action learning are necessary for a new practice to be developed and for the practical sense to be worked in interaction with the social world.

(Steinklammer, 2012: 31)

The resistance that education provides to habitualisation cannot be fully achieved in isolation from practice. Peters and Freeman-Moir (2006: 3) say of utopian pedagogy that “utopia links the special dimension of living with the

temporal dimension of learning and in that sense any utopian methodology can be said to ground education in the everyday fabric of the imagined society". However, if that society is merely imagined then where is the practical experience insisted upon by Steinklammer? The practical experience that students of higher education can have is creating alliances with groups prefiguring these utopian futures. Starting dialogues in order that they may create mutual benefit by setting up action research projects with stable groups (such as communes, free universities and the SSC, organisations like The Centre for Alternative Technology (<http://www.cat.org.uk/index.html>) and others) or as witness to protests, street demonstrations and occupations, practicing a larger, slower action research-type cycle there. As these groups of activists and people living otherwise in our society currently have limited access to institutions of HE, groups such as the SSC are ideal grounds for the presentation of findings and discussion of results. Groups such as the SSC could therefore, not only be autonomous education providers, but could also provide an essential link between the universities that will not grant access to community and activist groups. That is, until the divisions are dissolved. This process gives everyone, academics, community members, activists and any other interested parties equal (almost) access to theory and interruptional thought. This should result in the academic voice being heard in the protest and the community action and the subjugated voices of those currently excluded from HE being heard in the academy. This potentially results in a praxis where theory informs the practice of those outside the academy and practice informs the theory of those inside, although one hopes the divide is not as dichotomous as it may seem. This process contains several possibilities: the

dissolution of the barriers of HE in terms of the dissemination of knowledge and access to academic thinkers; the inclusion of more voices and experiences in academic work; the disappearing necessity for public intellectuals in favour of an intellectual public; and the rise and continuation of a radical democracy that encounters and celebrates countervailing discourses as a matter of necessity.

Ollis (2012: 8) says of her own research, and I would like to think of mine in the same way, that “this research, in itself, is a process of activism in that it gives voice to the pedagogy of activists and demands that their knowledge and skill be recognised in the mainstream epistemology”. Nevertheless, as with Kincheloe and Tobin earlier, I want to go further, I want to suggest that more is done than merely ‘give voice’ to the pedagogical Other. I want to assert that HE institutions and researchers *become*, wherever possible and to whatever extent, the pedagogical Other and make that Other the norm, a wonderful destabilised, unbalance, temporal and utopian norm. Shukaitis and Graeber (2007: 37), talking about experiments in militant/co-research say, “these new forms reveal glimpses of a future world, of the possibilities for liberation existing in the present”. The Invisible Committee (2009: 96) write, “it’s useless to wait – for a breakthrough, for the revolution, the nuclear apocalypse or a social movement. To go on waiting is madness. The catastrophe is not coming, it is here. We are already situated within the collapse of civilisation. It is within this reality that we must choose sides”. It is argued then that choosing sides is no longer the luxury of the politically active, of those with the time and energy to involve themselves in the workings of governance. It is a necessity that we all face. It has been said by feminist activists for a long time that the personal must become the political,

but the personal should now perhaps become more, it should become pedagogical: “‘society is not composed of individuals’, says Marx, society is not a ‘combination’, an ‘addition’ of individuals. What constitutes society is the system of its social relations, in which individuals live, work and struggle” (Leonardo, 2006: 82).

Education, like insurrection, requires building from the ground up, enclosed as it is in the mechanisms of schooling, testing and surveillance. Therefore, the future of education, like the future of all social relations, should hold the promise of “comradeship, dignity, amorosity, love, solidarity, fraternity, friendship, ethics: all these names stand in contrast to the commodified, monetised relations of capitalism, all describe relations developed in struggles against capitalism and which can be seen as anticipating or creating a society beyond capitalism” (Holloway, 2010: 43).

Each person’s struggles within education, to occupy the curriculum that emerges in the academy, in the community and on the streets, have, then, to be connected to the wider struggles, if they are not connected by those in the struggle, they will be connected by those they stand in opposition to. Indeed, they already are, the ‘New Precariat’ (Standing, 2011, 2013) includes academic workers on zero-hours contracts (Dunn, 2013; University and College Union, 2013). A destabilising of jobs as a means of control, surely? Therefore choosing and subsequently taking sides becomes a necessity: “it is only by taking sides that it becomes possible to understand the whole, and to transform it” (Roggero, 2011: 6).

The escape from enclosure

Not only education but social reality itself has become schooled.

Even if critical pedagogy in particular and education in general cannot by themselves reverse these conditions, they can break the silence moving us into the worst world possible. Interfere by teaching your heart out. Interfere with where we are headed by making classrooms public spaces whose discussions grapple with what is happening to us. Shine bright lights on the mechanisms of power.... Critical classrooms are opportunities to circulate unauthorised democratic discourse against the status quo.

(Shor in Macrine, 2009: 128-9)

Milojevic (2006: 24) asserts that “the main problem with the prevalence of the dystopian genre is its capacity to legitimise fears while delegitimising hope”. This makes escape from enclosure difficult, if not impossible. This, then, is the reality with which we are faced, a reality that Giroux (2001: xxiii), building on Adorno, accuses of being a “prohibition on thinking itself”. Therein, I would argue, lays the solution: *thinking itself*.

Walton (2011: 24) reminds us that capitalism “abhors critical thinking, outside its box”. So then, there is a start. It may not be activism that changes things (Holloway, 2010), it may not even be as ‘dramatic’ as the actions of people, but as humble and as obvious as our very thoughts that need to change. From dystopian to utopian, from fear and enclosure, out into the collective commons: trust as a centrally organising principle; social relations that create a safe space to explore our common ground; the understanding of process rather than fixity; the connection of the self and the social; thinking of each other as intelligent and agentic beings; creating collective experiences that are both confronting and convivial.

Organisations such as the SSC assist in this trajectory out of enclosure; creating this social and intellectual commons allows for what Cho (2013: 79) describes as “the everyday, small, yet significant, forms of resistance are conceived and celebrated as sources of possible challenges to, and eventual transformation of the system. In this way, every voice is regarded as emancipatory ...and every resistance is regarded as evidence for a rupture of power”. This is due to the insertion of the biographies of the individuals into the Sociological Imagination, allowing them to become celebrated as emancipators and resisters, the SSC does hold the potential to be seen as a ‘rupture of power’ if individuals do not allow their thinking to be prohibited or co-opted into ‘legitimising fears while delegitimising hope’ (Giroux, 2001). In the face of austerity and rampant neoliberalism, individuals can attempt to make new forms of corporate capitalism marginal to their lives and create new social relations and, as Esteva (2010: 29) insists begin “enclosing the enclosers”.

I argue then, that what is needed now is a social connection based on trust, solidarity, generosity and gift, but as Holloway (2010) warns, for the moment this can only exist as an oppositional form. The imperative for escape then, needs to be hopeful, utopian, but also in opposition, against - this is a battle ground. In the sites in this work, it was acknowledged that Occupy was *against* the banking system, austerity and the corruption in our political system; SaP is *against* the student as consumer model of the neoliberal university; the SSC is *against* the commodification of knowledge and the elitism of the university institution. But all are, or were, hopeful; hopeful of the actuality of new social relations; all believed in the positive possibilities and I argue that there is something very instructive to be learnt from that hope.

I use the word hope instead of optimism because their hope has been, and continues to be, realistic and grounded. Optimism would suggest that they are unaware of the difficulties, the struggles that might be ahead: they are not. Hope however, is the will to accept and overcome those difficulties, those struggles as autonomous projects in a collective struggle. The evidence of these sites suggests, therefore, that individuals need to organise and strategize for hope, for institutions of the commons, for the future of free thought itself. These struggles have to take place within, against and beyond our current enclosure because “there is no longer an outside within contemporary capitalism” (Roggero, 2011: 9).

Final words of radical hope

As human beings, there is no doubt that our main responsibilities consist in intervening in reality and keeping up our hope.

(Freire, 2007: 5)

My study has suggested that what will create the change needed for the escape from enclosure are the individuals and collective thoughts and actions of those people creating new commons in their newly occupied selves. Social movements here are seen as essential sites of slippage, of experimentation, of the collective and vibrant occupation of space and time. They practice essential forms of public pedagogy. However, they can also become sites of reproduction, activism is fast paced and deeply embedded cultural hegemonies are missed in the confusion and urgency of the action, especially when it is focused on external tensions, created by those remote from ordinary people’s everyday lives. Therefore, it is my view that when the action, the street eruption, the volcano of anger and emotion is spent – watched, witnessed and recorded as the *pedagogical moment* for the

educational researcher of public pedagogy – the activists should have the opportunity to regroup into their now more pedagogical institutions of the commons. Reflection and learning, extending the knowledge and the scope ready for the next action alongside researchers and other academics, embedding new learning at a personal and collective level in order to live otherwise now.

In this scenario, the researcher is not distant or detached; they are inside the pedagogical moment. They do not then ‘teach’ the activists where they went wrong, or how to be ‘better’ at activism, but start a dialogue, accepting the equality of intelligence but mindful of the essential roles each group plays in the activities of the other. They dialogue on an equal footing about what was missed, why that might have been, what should be celebrated and how it elicited change both inside and outside the movement. The critical distance of the researcher becomes ally for the group, not enemy, not the ritualised objectivity of a detached observer but the friend who picks you up when your energy is depleted. It is this space where more organisations such as the SSC are required, these places where activist and community members can insert their own biographies into the action, into the imaginings of sociality, where camaraderie, solidarity and equality can be discovered between individuals who have previously seen each other from a cultural distance. Now they occupy space and time in creative and intellectual ways. Moving collectively from the necessity of the public intellectual toward a fulfilling and vital intellectual public. Then perhaps one day, this organisational ideology could become what we now think of as academe. However, with all this seriousness of task abound, I feel that Merrifield has something essential to add at this point: “everyday politics, too, necessitates fun, means creating a

stir and kicking up a fuss; play nourishes politics just as political people should themselves be homo ludens (playing people)” (Merrifield, 2011: 22). People need to learn to enjoy their newly won freedoms too.

I assert here what many community and popular educators throughout space and time have understood. Merrifield (2011) asserts that the time for critique is over. I would disagree, the time for critique is rife, but that critique must escape the enclosure of the divided spectrum: the walls of academe and the activist circles and become a people’s critique: a popular critique. A critique carried out in organisations of the commons. However, to echo Holloway (2010) once more, we need to do more, we need to go further, we need now not only a collective critique, but also collective and individual action, infused with collective theorising. Making socially good use of our emergent intellectual public.

One notion has been echoed by the sites under examination here, the sentiment it carries has been useful to the thinking about what is needed to be done. What is required when Marx and Engels (1846/ 2007, p. 123) insist that philosophers only interpreted the world: “the point, however, is to change it”? That notion and the answer from the sites seems to be, to be truly radical and make hope possible, rather than despair convincing (Williams, 1989).

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